

IN THESE TIMES



The Return
of the Weavers

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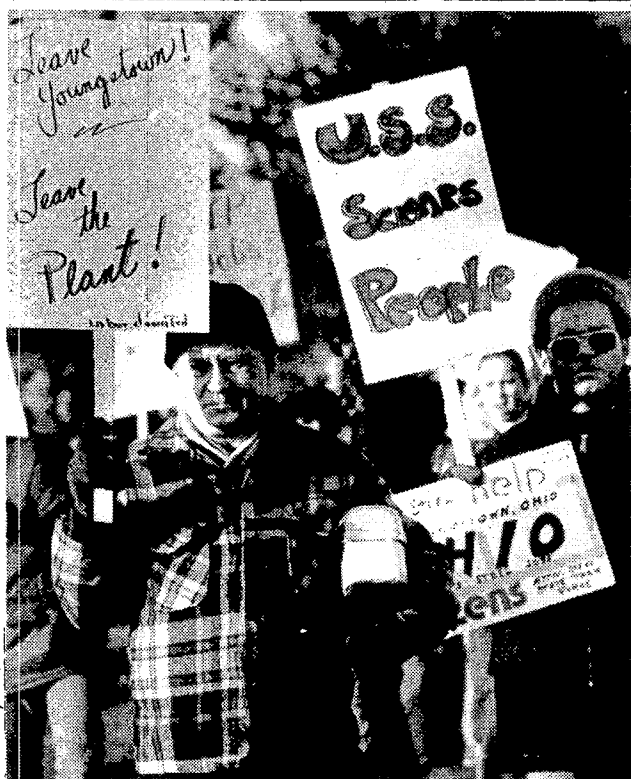
75 CENTS

EUROSOCIALISM

Will unemployment,
inflation, and slow growth spur
revival of basic principles?

The Tax Revolt Goes East

THE INSIDE STORY



Youngstown leaders O.K. compromise

By David Moberg

YOUNGSTOWN, OHIO

Since October 1977 the Youngstown, Ohio, area has been reeling under repeated shocks of steel mill closings—knocking out about 11,000 jobs and crucial sources of taxes for many communities. In those three years many individuals within the community joined with steelworkers and their local union leaders to stop the job hemorrhage, mainly through a worker-community owned steel company.

Although the first proposal to convert the closed portions of the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Campbell works to worker-community ownership failed due to federal government opposition, the project was revived with each new closing. When U.S. Steel closed all of its facilities in Youngstown a year ago, local union leaders charged that the corporation had broken a contract made when it promised to keep the mill open as long as it was profitable. In March they lost their law suit, but the appeals court ordered the district court judge to hear testimony on their contention that U.S. Steel violated antitrust laws by refusing to consider selling the closed facilities to the Community Steel Corporation because the newly formed company intended to apply for federal loan guarantees.

Last spring Community Steel pressured the Mahoning Valley Economic Development Corporation to apply to the federal Economic Development Administration (EDA) for a "pre-feasibility study" as a prelude to applying for the \$100 million in loan guarantees promised to the Mahoning Valley for a suitable steel project. Although the local agency had helped a number of privately-owned firms get loan guarantees, it has consistently been hostile to the community-owned plan and had to be pressured by the federal EDA even to apply for the preliminary study. It was only one of numerous instances at every level where the opposition to the community-worker project was not on the basis of the inherent workability or usefulness to the Mahoning Valley but rather its ideological cast.

But the proposal was not just some crazy left-wing fantasy. Trundle Consultants from Cleveland surveyed the closed facilities and the steel market and concluded that although the Ohio Works portion was not competitive, the McDonald Works section with its unique bar and shape mills could be re-opened gradually and provided with a new electric furnace and continuous caster. According to a finance study from Lehman Brothers of New York, the project could raise \$100 million in federally guaranteed loans and \$11 million in un-

guaranteed loans. The equity investment would come from an EDA adjustment assistance grant (\$13 million) and a Housing and Urban Development Action grant (\$10 million) to an employee stock ownership plan by way of a state agency. The revived mill could employ 486 workers in two years, 748 within five—far from the original 3,600 but still significant. By the fourth year the mill would have probably made a profit. The mill's prospects relied heavily on its special products. Some old customers had even been forced to turn to European suppliers after the mill closed, an ironic development considering U.S. Steel's active lobbying to keep out foreign steel.

But why would U.S. Steel give up a profitable operation? Donald R. Meckstroth, the chairman of Trundle, explained that U.S. Steel got out of the business and abandoned Youngstown "because it's too small of lot sizes. U.S. Steel has to be oriented to high volume lot operations." However, it turns out that U.S. Steel planned to turn a profit on the deal after all.

Last March, David Houck, who had been a superintendent at McDonald, approached two local businessmen, David Tod, the scion of the old Youngstown family that had originally helped to found Youngstown Sheet and Tube, and Daniel Roth, a local lawyer. Their Toro Enterprises took up Houck's suggestion of operating the most profitable mill and arranged with U.S. Steel to lease it, advancing no capital but agreeing to pay rent and 30 percent of their profits and retaining first rights of refusal on the two other mills.

Community Steel representatives were outraged, since the lease would have destroyed the possibility of realizing their more ambitious plan. They were also concerned about a memo they saw from Toro to U.S. Steel suggesting that Toro would try to run the plant without a union. Two other U.S. Steel facilities that were closed within the past year, the wire mill at Joliet, Ill., and the Gary, Ind., branch of Ambridge, have been leased by U.S. Steel to non-union firms, raising concern within the union of a new variety of union-busting. But some workers in Youngstown felt that the Community Steel advocates were blocking the one concrete possibility for reopening part of the factory, even though it would bring only 75 jobs at first and a maximum of 150.

The antitrust case, which was holding up Toro's operations under this new corporate heading of McDonald Steel, was scheduled for Nov. 19, but instead of a trial there were discussions in the judge's chambers among representatives of U.S. Steel, Community Steel and McDonald. The workers' lawyers recognized from the start that they had little chance of winning, but they could continue to agitate through the appeals process. Instead they decided to negotiate the best arrangement they could. As a result, McDonald Steel will go ahead with its project but will add one other mill to its list of potential leases. U.S. Steel agreed to speed up a \$2 million electrical conversion so the plant can open more quickly. McDonald Steel and Community Steel will each appoint three members of a joint committee to study how to put as many people back to work as possible. McDonald officials also agreed that Community Steel would continue to pursue the federal loan guarantees and full feasibility study and would send a representative to the next meeting with EDA.

It wasn't an unalloyed triumph for those who wanted a worker-community steel mill, but it was not a total defeat. "The stage is now set for McDonald Steel to be much larger, as many as 650 jobs instead of 150," Rev. Charles Rawlings, a Community Steel board member, said. Without the lawsuit and continued pressure, it is

unlikely that Toro would have pursued the more ambitious plan. Also, the principle of community involvement is established with the committee, and some worker-community control could be established if local steelworkers and allies buy a controlling share in the expected \$3 million stock offering. Also in an indirect fashion federal loan guarantees will be pursued despite U.S. Steel's pledge never to sell to a company that received such aid.

But U.S. Steel did refuse to grant the right of first refusal to lease the No. 18 rolling mill and Community Steel lawyer Staughton Lynd noted that "it struck us as more than a coincidence that the 18 mill is the only one that competes with U.S. Steel."

Lynd thinks that the EDA application may be enhanced now that the proposal involves some local businessmen, whom he likened to the progressive, nationalistic bourgeoisie in an anti-colonial struggle, with absentee, large corporations cast in the "colonial" role. Even so, Tod and Roth remain bourgeoisie—as operators of a van conversion company near Youngstown from 1972 to 1978 they vigorously fought against unionization.

After years of effort, the steelworkers and community activists now can assess their successes and failures. "It's like a wave coming into the beach: there's just so far up the beach that wave can go," Lynd said. "I think we've probably done as much as can be done in this valley as far as recreating the steel industry. It's not my utopia. It took the form of a capitalist enterprise, but one shouldn't be surprised at that, and it's better than nothing."

For Bob Vasquez, president of the Ohio Works local and of Community Steel, the most important lesson for other workers is, "Don't wait till they shut down. Look at the trade manuals. Watch what the competition is using. The best job security is a competitive factory. When they tell you [what they invest in] is none of your business, say, 'What do you mean, none of our business? You've seen what happened in Youngstown.'"

Lynd, a key figure from the beginning, draws several conclusions: the natural leadership of such a shutdown struggle is the local union leadership (and community-religious groups are a second-best substitute); there's a special life-cycle to shutdown struggles that provides mass intensity for about two months before people begin to fade away; worker ownership may work best with small firms, but it is a "program almost by inadvertence" in the absence of other alternatives, such as nationalization.

Looking back at the community's strategies, he sees the legal tactics as secondary, a substitute when mass activity isn't available, and he believes now that "the single biggest mistake in the Youngstown struggle was to leave the U.S. Steel administration building after occupying it only six hours" last winter. Militancy and disruption, even strikes may have a role to play in combating shutdowns. But there was another promising strategy, ownership by the local government, possibly exercising its rights of eminent domain, that could not be pursued because there weren't progressive local city council members already in office in Youngstown, Campbell or McDonald.

"The plant closing situation is the only one I've seen where Americans naturally begin to think about socialism," Lynd said. "So there are certain ideological, political possibilities that are exciting. But there are organizational problems, strategic problems. What is the program? Maybe somebody has found the answer, but we have not."

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IN THESE TIMES

This year, foreign imports will grab one-third of the U.S. car market.



Feds say no favors for big three

By Michael Curtin

BERKELEY, CA

IN THE MOST FAR-REACHING decision of its two-year history, the International Trade Commission (ITC) has ruled against import restrictions on foreign cars. The Nov. 10 decision effectively prevents President Carter from taking action on the issue and dumps the problem in the lap of the new Reagan administration.

The ITC, a quasi-judicial body formed by act of Congress originally was chartered with hopes of depoliticizing trade restrictions. The five-member board is charged with recommending federal executive action in situations where import competition is determined to be the most significant cause of injury to a domestic industry.

Last year, foreign imports captured a record 22 percent of U.S. auto sales. This year, they grabbed an impressive 34 percent in the first six months and will easily hold onto a third of the market through the end of the year. Ford Motor Company and the United Auto Workers Union filed a grievance with the ITC, claiming that foreign competition threatens domestic jobs and the economy. But the ITC disagreed.

By a vote of three to two, the commissioners ruled that the cause of the current domestic auto slump is not Japanese competition. Writing for the majority, Dr. Paula Stern summed up, "After two great oil crises in the last seven years and the perceived quality deficiencies of domestic autos, the U.S. market changed significantly, and these imports were in a position to benefit. We should not, however, blame the messenger for the bad tidings."

Nissan USA, importers of Datsun vehicles, immediately released a statement saying it is "heartened" by the ruling, while Toyota Motor Sales, Inc., called it "good news for free trade and the American consumer."

But Ford Motor Company chief executive Phillip Caldwell was openly distressed. He ominously predicted more factory closings and lay-offs in an industry that has already idled almost 200,000 workers. Ford's international operations have bailed the company out of some serious domestic losses over the past few years and Caldwell sees more production moving overseas without trade protection. "There's a very obvious way to solve this whole problem," Caldwell told the *Washington Post* in an interview published the day before the ITC ruling, "Why don't we all go to Japan and ship [cars] back to the U.S.?"

The badly hurting United Auto Workers Union joined Ford in filing for relief with the ITC. "The long-range goal has to be to get the Japanese to locate here and produce here," says union president

Douglas Fraser. Having failed to persuade the Japanese automakers voluntarily to locate in the U.S., the UAW recently reversed its free trade policy. It now supports import restrictions and "local content rules" that would require a fixed percentage of the parts in all cars sold in this country to be produced domestically.

The import restrictions sought by the UAW would cut foreign sales by about one million cars annually over the next three to five years. Already, Honda, Nissan and Volkswagen have built or proposed the construction of one manufacturing facility in this country that would be free from such restrictions. The UAW would like to see them build more, while Detroit executives would simply like to cut the market share of their competitors.

Both union and management are also pressing for a 20 percent to 25 percent tariff on imports. This would make the new, higher-priced domestic compacts competitive with the Japanese models.

This fall, amid one of the most expensive advertising campaigns in auto history, the Big Three unveiled their new line of front-wheel-drive, fuel-efficient cars. General Motors came up with its J-car, Chrysler with its K-car and Ford with its Escort—but all three set a list price well above their competitors from Datsun, Honda and Toyota.

Selling the public expensive cars that don't quite match the competition in gas economy or quality will be difficult unless Detroit can somehow sweeten the pot. With a 20 percent tariff on the Japanese imports, the domestic compacts would enjoy a price advantage of \$500 to \$600.

Detroit executives claim they desperately need to create a profitable pricing structure to help pay off the billions of dollars it will cost to down-size product lines. Key to building smaller cars is the introduction of front-wheel drive, which allows the greatest proportion of passenger space in a given exterior shell.

Company engineers say the complexity of front-wheel drive will add about \$200 to the manufacturing cost of each automobile. On top of that is the cost of converting manufacturing facilities to accommodate the new designs. One Chrysler executive estimates it will cost the U.S. automakers close to \$80 billion to make the conversion over the next five years.

Amortizing these expenditures will demand an entirely new pricing structure. Traditionally, domestic producers relied on size differentials to establish the sticker price for their cars. The bigger the car, the higher the price and also the higher the profit margin. The mark-up on a luxury model ran as high as 25 percent, compared to 15 percent for compacts.

Now that the smaller cars are selling at a higher volume, the Big Three are tightening the spread by cutting prices on the bigger cars and jumping the retail price on the smaller models.

To stay competitive with the Japanese companies and still return a profit, Ford executives are hoping to inflate the price of imports through higher tariffs.

Rebuffed by the ITC, the petitioners are turning to other channels. "This is now a matter for the president and Congress to determine," says Ford's Caldwell. "They have the opportunity to move quickly to take actions in the interest of the United States."

UAW Washington representative Steven Schlossberg is calling for President Carter and the lame-duck Congress to take action immediately. But there is little chance of that, since Carter had originally turned the matter over to the ITC,

Reagan endorsed import restrictions in his bid to sway blue-collar voters.



saying he would base his action on their ruling. With a negative decision from the board, there is little chance Carter or the Congress will move with any speed.

That places the ball squarely in Reagan's court. During the campaign, in his pursuit of blue-collar votes in the industrial Northeast and Midwest, Reagan reversed himself on free trade and expressed support for import restrictions and the Chrysler bail-out. Those statements caused quite a stir in Republican circles.

At a recent luncheon of San Francisco business leaders, Reagan was criticized by economist Milton Friedman, who told a warmly receptive audience that while he supports Reagan, he finds it hard to believe he would go through with such policies.

Like Reagan, Friedman favors the deregulation of the auto industry by lifting

safety and environmental standards. Only then does he think Detroit vehicles will be competitive domestically and internationally. He also blames the current auto crisis on government policy, saying, "Most difficulties of the industry today are not caused by their short-sightedness or defects, it's caused by the mistaken government energy policy."

"After the [1973-74] oil crisis, our government tried to hold down the price of gasoline making it unprofitable to produce small cars with high gas mileage. Then a year ago, we changed policy and allowed the price of gasoline to double," Friedman says the industry did not have time to respond.

While many Reagan advisors share Friedman's view, others are sure to note that even though the feds held down gas prices for six years, they also pushed Detroit to increase the mileage ratings on cars. In fact, the stiffest resistance to gas economy came from auto executives who wanted to believe the oil shortage would never return so they could keep selling highly profitable mid-size and luxury cars.

As for the UAWers, things look gloomy. With 20 percent to 25 percent of UAW members already laid-off from the Big Three plants, union leaders are wondering how many of those will ever be called back to work. The transition to the smaller, more efficient engines and chassis calls for more than the typical retooling of model year changeovers.

U.S. automakers have installed entirely new, more automated production lines. Some UAW staffers estimate the smaller cars will require only two-thirds the labor hours of a standard size car. They are projecting that the 1979 union workforce of over 700,000 at the Big Three could be cut in half by the 1990s.

The UAW blames Detroit for the current slump, but they still feel the need to convince the Japanese companies to produce at least part of each car they sell in the U.S. domestically. While that may create some new jobs for UAW members, Fraser is also looking to other plans for the future.

During the presidential election campaign, Citizens Party candidate Barry Commoner went to the UAW seeking its endorsement. Though the UAW leadership did not recommend support for Commoner, they did ask him to come back for further discussions after the election.

Commoner told the UAW that the U.S. auto industry could be converted to more fuel efficient and environmentally sound, alcohol burning cars in a matter of two or three years. He points to Brazil—which has already started this transition—and claims that alcohol fuel can be provided by sensible use of agriculture and timber products.

Michael Curtin is a reporter for KPFA Radio and Pacifica National News.

IN SHORT

...but four's a gang

Chinese authorities have reissued a sex manual that gives the official positions on reproductive matters. First published in 1963, "Information on Sex" offers this sobering anecdote concerning "nymphomania": "A certain female cultural worker married a music teacher 10 years her senior. The man's sexual desires were normal, but the girl's were more developed and she could never get satisfaction. This caused anguish and affected her work...."

The pamphlet recommends the adoption of "correct communist attitudes" as a cure for sex-related "nervous weakness." We tried it, and it works.

Chemical welfare

This past Veterans Day marked the third anniversary of the Agent Orange controversy. The ever-cautious Veterans Administration has yet to acknowledge any general connection between exposure to the pesticide and health problems among Vietnam vets and their offspring. As it now stands, the burden of proof is on each individual to convince the VA that such a link exists.

The VA has been equally frigid toward atomic veterans. As many as half a million American soldiers, according to Pentagon estimates, were exposed to radiation from nuclear weapons tests in the South Pacific and Nevada between 1945 and 1962, yet it's been nearly impossible for any of them to get federal compensation for their service-related illnesses. The National Association of Atomic Veterans (NAAV) and the Clergy and Laity Concerned are establishing 40 referral centers across the country to help locate atomic test vets. For details, write to the NAAV at 1109 Franklin St., Burlington, Iowa 52601.

Friendly competition

It's time to change ribbons, dust off that old Royal manual with the hydraulic touch and whip up an entry for the second annual award of the Eugene V. Debs Foundation, named after the organizer of the American Railroad Union and longtime leader and candidate of the old Socialist Party. Six hundred dollars will go to the author of "the best article or essay (published or unpublished) clearly identified with a theme of social protest or social justice in the Debs tradition." The deadline for submissions is April 30, 1981, so there's plenty of time to send a self-addressed stamped envelope to the Bryant Spann Memorial Prize Committee, History Dept., Indiana State University, Terre Haute, IN 47809; you'll get back the complete application instructions.

Waste on wheels

The Critical Mass Energy Project, a wing of Ralph Nader's Public Citizen Inc., has released a study showing that the frequency of transportation accidents involving shipments of radioactive materials has mushroomed in the last four years. Last year, 122 such accidents were reported—a 23 percent jump over 1978 figures and nearly twice as many as in 1976.

But even these figures understate the problem, say the authors of the report. A crucial shortcoming in the present system of radioactive shipments is "the near total lack of adequate...inspection or record-keeping activities by local, state or federal agencies." Right now, the U.S. Department of Transportation is drafting regulations that will further reduce the ability of some 100 state and local governments to regulate atomic shipments through their communities, while the DOT makes no promises of increased federal monitoring or improved safety measures.

Other findings of the CMEP study:

- There was a seven-fold increase—from \$26,386 in 1978 to \$187,044 in 1979—in the total dollar figure for property damage caused by nuclear transport accidents.
- All but 19 of the 122 mishaps in 1979 occurred during highway transit, with 92 attributable to a single trucking firm, Tri-state Motor Transit Co. of Joplin, Mo.
- Though accidents were reported in 22 states, more than half were in South Carolina, home of the Barnwell radioactive waste dump.

It's a jungle out there

The coming months will find Pat Aufderheide, our culture editor, wintering in the Brazilian jungle (where it is now spring). While Pat does anthropological research with the Kreen Akarore Indian tribe, Robert Schaeffer, who has twice served as *In These Times*' managing editor, will fill in. Robert will return to the jungle of academe when Pat comes back.

—Josh Kornbluth



On Nov. 18, 114 of 1,500 demonstrators were arrested for blocking entrances to the Pentagon. The all-female action was organized to protest the escalation of U.S. militarism and sexism. Demonstrators earlier encircled the Pentagon and planted these symbolic gravestones.

Will hard times for labor spur on a new left politics?

The threat of declining manufacturing jobs and plant closings is uniting an increasing number of labor unions and community organizations in what may become—along with coalitions on other issues, such as energy—a foundation of left politics for the coming decade. Already the Ohio Public Interest Campaign has built on its early work for legislation regulating plant closings to create a broad coalition that mounted a serious, albeit losing, progressive tax reform initiative this year.

At its fifth annual convention on Nov. 15, the Illinois Public Action Council expanded its campaign for legislation that would require notification of plant closings and provide severance pay, community assistance and continuation of health insurance after closings, similar to legislation reportedly introduced now in at least 13 states. But the job-loss conference of 350 people on the day after the convention, co-sponsored by Public Action and 15 unions, took a new twist by emphasizing early warning signals of potential plant closings. Public Action hopes to pressure the state's Department of Commerce and Community Affairs to establish a special task force for early identification of plant closings and provision of assistance to workers and the community.

"Don't be too comfortable," former local union leader Melba Meacham said, reflecting on her experience at Hiram Walker in Peoria. "You can't afford to. Just because it's profitable, don't think they won't close your plant." Public Action estimates that 140,000 manufacturing jobs have been lost from Illinois in the past 10 years. The organization is working not only to dampen the blow from the shutdowns but also to mobilize union pension funds, if possible, to create new jobs.

In the past two years, Public Action has brought in 25 unions as

affiliates and expanded its community affiliates in Chicago, where the statewide federation of 80 affiliated groups had been weak. Jim Wright, the new regional director of the UAW and a new board member of Public Action, said that he favored more coalition work as a way to regain political initiative after the recent conservative victories and to become less dependent on the Democratic Party organizational machinery. Public Action maintains projects on city neighborhoods (emphasizing crime, tenant rights and redlining), utilities and tax reform as well as on plant closings.

—David Moberg

Battered killer won't be tried

The state of Connecticut has declined to prosecute a woman who killed her lover in part because he had a history of beating her.

Wallace Quiller had been drinking at a neighbor's party that night, Oct. 15, 1979, and his girlfriend, Edna Louise Pipkins, had a good idea what to expect. For the two years they had been living together in Hartford, his drunken episodes had led him to violent acts, invariably directed against Pipkins.

In fact, as the prosecution told the court Oct. 31, Pipkins had called police with assault complaints nearly once a month since they had lived together. Twice, Quiller was arrested. Twice, Pipkins had to be hospitalized. Invariably, the police would remove Quiller from the apartment in the low-income housing project where they lived, and Quiller would invariably return.

Pipkins said once in an interview that she tolerated Quiller's behavior because she loved him. She also said she couldn't move because she couldn't afford it while supporting four children, one of them by Quiller, on a welfare recipient's income.

Battered women's advocates came to her aid and presented a petition of 1,000 signatures gathered from across the country to the prosecutor, John M. Bailey. But Bailey said his decision not to prosecute was influenced less by the evidence: a hysterical phone call to police the night of the incident, an apparent act of self-defense by Pipkins and the history of abuse she endured.

—Bruce Kauffman

They did right, voted for left

A bright spot in the Nov. 4 elections was the state of Minnesota, where results ran sharply counter to the national right-wing landslide. Cartoons in Minnesota papers now depict boatloads of refugees landing on the state's shores, begging "Please take us in. We're liberals." In Minnesota, the voters not only turned thumbs down on Reagan, but also gave a net increase of legislative seats to the Democratic Farmer-Labor Party (DFL), which suffered a major defeat two years ago.

From a democratic left perspective, the results were brighter still—especially for the Farmer-Labor Association (FLA), a movement begun in 1976 to revive Minnesota's left heritage and restore the principles of the Farmer-Labor Party (a third party that dominated Minnesota in the 1930s and merged with the Democrats in 1944).

With a program and vision similar to that of the Citizens Party, the FLA has chosen to compete for power within the DFL. The 700-member organization has so far established chapters in nearly a dozen Minnesota communities, attracted a wide following among farmers and won city election races in Minneapolis, Duluth, St. Cloud, Two Harbors and other small communities.

This trend continued on Nov. 4, with the election of FLA candidate Karen Clark to the Minnesota legislature by a margin of better than two to one. A nurse and lesbian feminist with a background of neighborhood, union and gay activism, 35-year-old Clark won in a Minnesota district with one of the highest concentrations of senior citizens in the nation. Stressing neighborhood concerns and the value of citizen cooperation in solving problems, and articulating an anti-corporate economic program to combat inflation in the necessities, she out-organized her primary and general election opponents.

Clark campaigned for a state bank and a public energy corporation, control of inflation through rent control and an investigation of Minnesota's giant food monopolies. Her work in AFSCME and the FLA's active strike support work resulted in solid union support for her candidacy.

In addition to the Clark victory, incumbent FLA members in the Minnesota legislature were returned to office with majorities averaging better than 70 percent. And in a western Minnesota farm district that voted 60 percent for Reagan, FLA candidate Earl Hauge, a Lutheran minister, upset the Republican incumbent. Another FLA challenger, former air force major John Considine, narrowly lost. All in all, it was an impressive showing for an organization with a program as left as that of the Citizens Party.

—John de Graaf

IN THE NATION

INITIATIVES

Prop. 13 was never like this

By Robert Goodman

BOSTON

ON ELECTION DAY, MASSACHUSETTS passed a clone of California's Proposition 13. The Massachusetts referendum mandated the legislature to limit local property taxes to 2.5 percent of market value. An unusual 82 percent voter turnout passed it by an overwhelming three-to-two margin.

One thing is sure—the effect of a lid on property taxes in Massachusetts is going to be very different from that in California. Massachusetts doesn't have a near-\$7-billion state surplus to shift back to local communities, communities that will lose an estimated 18 percent of their tax revenue in the first year alone. For years now, Massachusetts had been scrambling for ways to cut public expenses and increase state income.

Proposition 2½ is not timid. It's a grab-bag of anti-tax measures that goes beyond Proposition 13. It not only effectively slashes average property taxes by more than 25 percent and limits any further increases to 2½ percent over the previous year, but also gives tenants the right to deduct half their yearly rent for income tax purposes and cuts the state's auto excise tax (a big source of local revenue) by more than 50 percent.

The proposition eliminates a local school board's ability to determine its own budget, eliminates binding arbitration for police and fire contracts, and eliminates the power of the state legislature to pass any laws that require additional expenditures by cities and towns. Like Proposition 13, it requires a two-thirds vote by the local electorate to override any of its provisions. This is, in short, the single most sweeping popular referendum vote to come out of Massachusetts in a generation.

Some of 2½ could have been written by the left. For example, the local property tax takes a big bite out of working people's incomes; tenants being able to deduct half their rent from state income taxes helps some working people. But 2½ was created, nurtured and carried to the people by the right.

The line-up on 2½ went like this—a Massachusetts group called Citizens for Limited Taxation (CLT) got the required signatures to put 2½ on the ballot. A number of CLTers are known for their ultra-right-wing views. Former CLT executive director Donald Feder, for example, calls for eliminating public works departments and having private ownership of streets. Schools and fire protection, says Feder, should be provided by private companies; government should be limited to providing an army, a police force and the courts.

Joining CLT and providing a good share of the financial support for media advertising was the High Technology Council, a group of more than 90 of the state's noted computer, electronic and aerospace industries, including Digital Equipment Company, Wang Laboratories and Prime Computer.

Although leaders of these industries may not publicly espouse a right-wing ideology, they were ardent supporters. The direct financial gains of real estate tax relief for the individual High Tech Council companies will be minor—they were primarily concerned with improving the state's high tax image in order to attract out-of-state engineering and scientific personnel at lower salaries.

Opposed to 2½ was a group of strange bedfellows: the executives of the private finance community, the major public unions, statewide citizens action groups,



Proposition 2½ is a grab-bag of measures that, among other things, strips local school districts of their budget powers.

occasional Chambers of Commerce, left legislators and, nominally, the private sector labor unions. The financial community, affectionately described by some politicians as "the lenders and spenders," was represented by the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation, a group comprised of corporate leaders from the state's financial community. The Foundation's executive committee reads like a mini-directory of big state and international financing companies: First National Bank of Boston, New England Mutual Life Insurance, Paine, Webber, Curtis and Jackson, etc.

Like the financial community's fight against Proposition 13 in California, the financiers here were troubled that a drastic property tax cap could wreak havoc with public services: schools, roads, police and fire-fighters needed to keep and attract industry. They were also concerned about the outstanding debt owed them by localities and their ability to market future bonds; business that thrives on debt doesn't want to see its sources go dry. The stark reality is that if budgets are drastically cut some communities may be forced to default, or at least be very late in paying. Many may simply be unable to go into debt in the future.

As the dust settles, the players are already positioning themselves for the next step. State legislators, including most of those who fought the proposition, typically proclaim that the electorate has

spoken and promise to do their best to make it work. One state senator, who after the election declared the proposition a disaster and said he would immediately file a bill for its repeal, was barraged with irate and threatening phone calls.

Proposition 2½ bears close attention. This is no example of the ordinary folk being outspent by their corporate opposition. The proponents of the proposition were outspent by their opponents—a major part of whose funds came from the Massachusetts Teachers Association.

What happened in Massachusetts and tax initiatives in other states begins to flesh out the meaning of the "Taxpayers' Revolt." Tax limitation initiatives have been approved by voters in more than 10 states, but voters are not simply moving to the right or prone to pass any kind of tax limit proposals.

As Bob Kuttner points out in *The Revolt of the Haves*, people may want lower taxes, but they also want good public services. In this past election tax limitation initiatives lost in more states than they won. Tax limits won approval in Arkansas, Missouri, Montana and West Virginia, but they went down to defeat, sometimes by substantial margins, in Michigan, Oregon, Arizona, Nebraska, Nevada, South Dakota and Utah.

Massachusetts voters didn't simply vote down taxes, they voted down property taxes—the highest, after Alaska's, in the country. More than 55 percent of

all local revenues are produced by the local property tax in Massachusetts, compared to a national average of 33 percent. In all the states that defeated tax caps this year, property tax rates were about 30 percent less in proportion to per capita income than in Massachusetts. And over the past 10 years, Massachusetts has suffered the effects of private disinvestment; between 1970 and 1978, the state had one of the lowest rates of industrial growth in the country. Proponents of 2½ argued that without tax cuts even fewer jobs would be created.

The rising costs of local public services, spurred by inflation and private disinvestment and coupled with a local public financing system that relies heavily on the property tax, provided a natural organizing ground for a drastic attack on the property tax, a tax that fell hardest on working people who owned their own homes. It was in the poorest communities, with the highest property taxes like Boston, Chelsea and Somerville, that people were forced to make the no-win choice between voting for higher taxes or lower services.

"I don't think it's perfect," said one homeowner who also teaches in an affluent suburb little affected by the proposition. "I'd rather see a graduated income tax. But I'm afraid not to vote for it because then nothing will happen."

In carrying the banner for 2½, the right chose a battlefield where it could successfully coopt the left's program for lower taxes for working people. Of course they also provided these benefits (albeit in more luxurious sums) for the wealthy. But with nothing better to vote for, the right was able to carry the day, positioning itself as a champion of the common folk against big, unresponsive government.

The next phase in Massachusetts tax reform will decide whether or not the state's working-class communities can retrieve their public services. The battle has shifted to the state house, where politicians and leaders of elderly, welfare, and community organizations are hoping to draft legislation allowing the state to make up the shortfall in local funds caused by 2½; there is talk of broadening the sales tax or a graduated income tax (a proposal that failed on three previous initiatives). There is also talk of allowing local communities to override 2½ with a simple majority vote.

As the effects of drastic cutbacks in teacher, fire and police services become real, the mood for a thorough overhaul of the state's tax structure could grow. Some legislators see it as a new opportunity to create a graduated state income tax to replace the current flat rate. State Senator Dennis McKenna, who represents several working-class communities, personally favors the graduated tax. "The people have indicated they're outraged at the archaic tax structure...they expect us to act," says McKenna. But he, like a number of other legislators, worries about the possibility of getting support for a tax that failed by substantial margins in the past. Although he considers the sales tax "regressive on its face," he believes there may be ways of making it progressive, such as taxes on machinery.

Battle plans for the next phase of the Massachusetts tax reform war are now being drawn. If the state's progressive leadership is to avoid their reactive position on 2½, fighting a proposal a large part of which they could have written themselves, they will need to act quickly.

Leaders of the fight to pass 2½ (Citizens for Limited Taxation) have already served notice they will oppose any form of graduated income tax. Meanwhile, the financial community (the Massachusetts Taxpayers Foundation) is touting cost cutbacks in education, public transit and human services, and lobbying to include more goods and services under the state's sales tax. Said Foundation president Richard Manley, "You're taxing the poor guy out of his house—so what if he has to pay a little more for his clothing."

Robert Goodman's latest book is *The Last Entrepreneurs: America's Regional Wars for Jobs and Dollars* (Simon & Schuster). He works at the Center for the Study of Public Policy in Somerville, Mass.

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JUSTICE

Greensboro jury acquits Klan

By Patricia MacKay

GREENSBORO, N.C.

VERDICTS OF NOT GUILTY ON all counts were returned to the six Klan-Nazi defendants charged with the murder of five anti-Klan demonstrators and members of the Communist Workers Party last year in Greensboro.

After a five-month trial, the all-white jury of six men and six women deliberated for one week before finding the two Nazis and four Klansmen not guilty of riot or murder. Jury foreman Octavio Mandauley, a Cuban exile and member of an anti-Castro organization, told the press: "The jury does not condone any of the three groups involved—Klan, Nazis or Communists—and they regret that this unfortunate thing happened in our city." Another juror said, "No group, regardless of their beliefs, has a right to thrust their beliefs on others."

Signe Waller, widow of slain CWP leader Jim Waller, and Kurt Krumperman, spokespeople for the CWP, said that the district attorney orchestrated a cover-up of what they called federal government-sponsored assassinations of the five CWP leaders. "The verdict is a green light for more Klan-Nazi killings," they said.

Despite all the evidence to the contrary, jury members felt that the Klan-Nazis had fired their guns in self-defense. They believe that these six defendants killed the CWP members but that the killings were justified.

TV videotape, photographs and the testimony of 132 witnesses revealed that on Nov. 3, 1979, about 75 anti-Klan demonstrators were gathered at a black housing project. Suddenly a nine-car caravan

of Klan and Nazis drove onto the narrow streets where the demonstrators were preparing to march. There was chanting and yelling back and forth between the demonstrators and the Klan-Nazis in the cars, and some demonstrators beat on some of the cars. A fist-fight broke out, and shots were fired from the Klan-Nazi caravan.

While the demonstrators, including children, ran for cover, the Klan and Nazi defendants aimed their fire into the crowd, killing five people and wounding eleven.

According to FBI ballistics testimony, 39 shots were fired in 88 seconds. Some of the demonstrators fired back in self-defense 51 seconds after the shooting started.

The five people killed were two Jewish pediatricians, Mike Nathan and Jim Waller (who was also a textile mill union organizer); a black woman union organizer; and past president of the Bennett College student body, Sandy Smith; a native Cuban and hospital union organizer, Cesar Cauce; and a Harvard divinity student, medical doctor and union organizer, Bill Sampson. All five were members of the CWP. All were shot while hiding or running away, and all were unarmed.

While the evidence was overwhelming against the Klan-Nazis, the performance of the district attorney's office was not. They weakened their case by indicting only 16 of the 40 Klan-Nazis in the car caravan, and failing to indict owners of murder weapons, Klan and Nazi leaders and two government agents. The district attorney did not question prospective jurors as to their attitudes on race.

The defense attorneys excluded blacks from the jury, and the DA reflected anti-Communist feeling by asking the jurors: "While the Communists stand for the



The jury believed that Lawrence Morgan and his five co-defendants killed in self-defense.

opposite of everything you believe in, could you be fair?" Some prospective jurors were prophetic in their answers. "It is less of a crime to kill a Communist," said one. "Since they do not believe in our laws, they should not be protected by them."

The DA rejected the CWP's widows' motion that a special prosecutor be brought in to help the state. CWP eyewitnesses refused to testify. The DA referred to the victims only as "the de-

In contrast, the defense attorneys wrapped the Klan-Nazis in a cloak of patriotism. Sheriffs of two rural counties testified as character witnesses, and the defendants, all of whom testified, refused to admit that they were racists. Instead, they claimed they were patriotic Americans who wanted to stop the spread of communism. The DA commented that the defense attorney made the Klan sound "like a Rotary Club gone mad."

The DA failed to call two government agents, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Fire-arms agent Bernard Butkovich and FBI police informant Ed Dawson, as witnesses. Butkovich had infiltrated the Nazis and Dawson had infiltrated the Klan. Although their testimony would have embarrassed and exposed the government, they could have given information about the planning and violent intentions of the Klan and Nazis.

The defense attorneys did a good job of red-baiting and intimidating the state's witnesses with such questions as: "Have you ever read a Communist leaflet? Are you a church member in a Christian church?"

Under North Carolina law the judge is allowed to summarize the evidence and give the jurors copies of such. This contributed to the not guilty verdict because Judge James Long lent his respectability and authority to defendants' reasons for bringing guns when he reiterated their claim that it is customary and traditional to do so.

Although the trial was long and complicated, with 600 pieces of evidence, 2,200 bullet and pellet fragments analyzed by the FBI, and four conference tables full of guns and ammunition, many questions remain unanswered. For instance, why were the police not at the scene when they had three hours warning from their informants that nine carloads of armed Klansmen were on their way to an anti-Klan rally in a black neighborhood?

The district attorney's office plans to announce whether it will bring to trial the other eight Klan-Nazi defendants. Six CWP demonstrators charged with felony and riot will begin trial in January. ■



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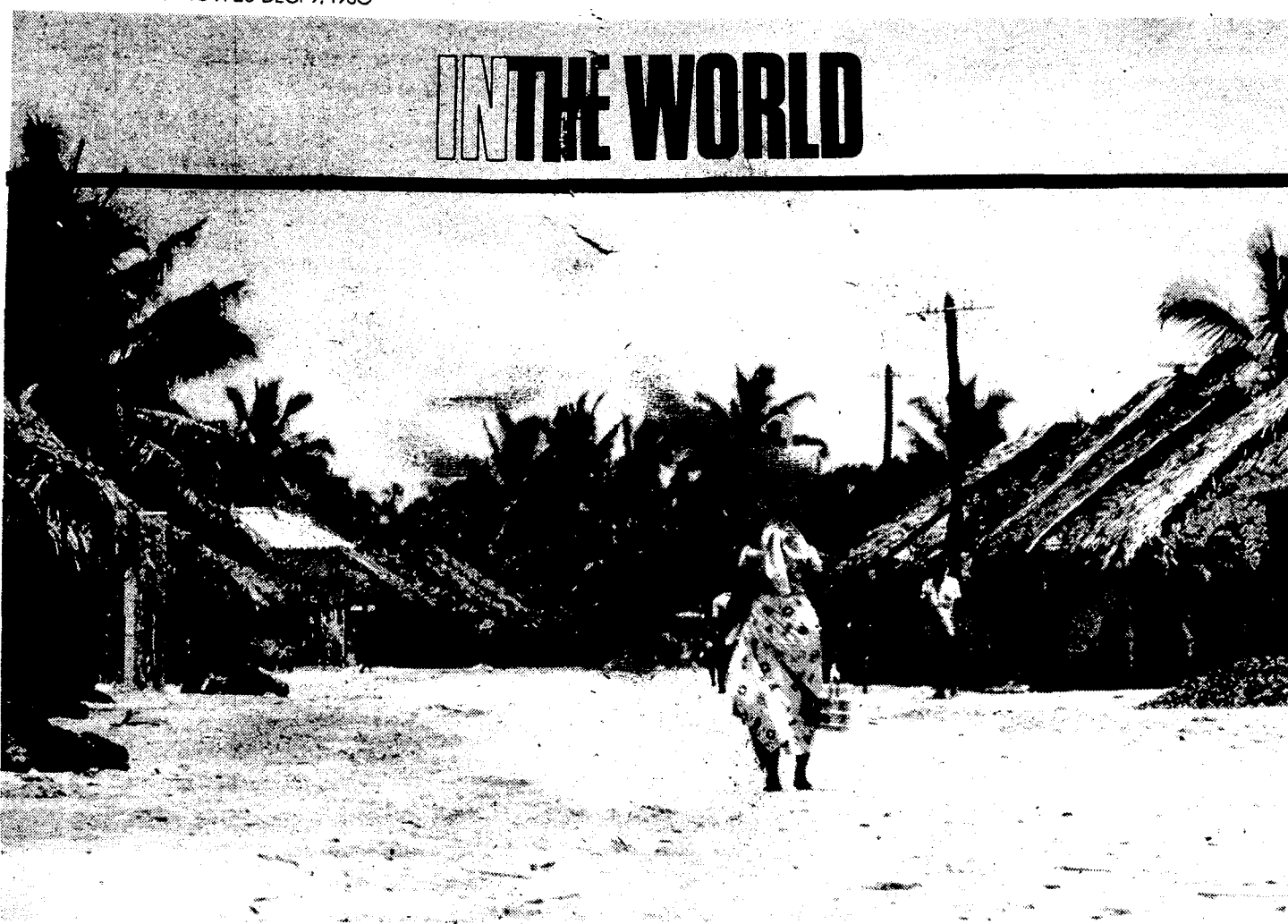
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IN THE WORLD



Before independence, black Mozambicans were not permitted to build with cement; the "reed cities" that ring the central section of Maputo had no electricity and scarce water.

MOZAMBIQUE

Self help and simple dogma combat colonialism's legacy

By James North

MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE

THIS GRACEFUL CAPITAL OF one million people is divided into two parts. The center, called the "cement city," was beloved by tourists of a bygone era for its wide streets, lined with a colorful profusion of trees and shrubs, its sidewalk cafes and its stupendous view of the Indian Ocean. Inland, past several miles of apartment blocks of steadily decreasing opulence, is Maputo's other, less presentable section: the "reed city." Thousands of ramshackle, jerry-built shacks of reed and thatch spill toward the north, criss-crossed by dusty, crooked streets.

The precise population of the reed city is unknown, but it is at least half, and possibly two-thirds, that of Maputo as a whole. In the colonial period, before 1975, the cement city was largely reserved for whites and the handful of blacks who repudiated their own culture and were officially approved as *assimilados*.

After independence, most of the whites fled. The incoming Frelimo government nationalized rental property, lowered the rents, and moved thousands into town. Today, brightly colored *capulanas*, the cotton skirts universally worn by women here, hang drying in the ocean breeze outside apartments once occupied by colonialists.

But most of the reed city residents had to remain where they were. They awaited the new government eagerly, though they were relatively ignorant about it. Frelimo had begun its war in 1964, 1,000 miles to the north, and though the struggle spread south with its growing success, the guerrillas had managed to liberate only about one-third of the country when the Portuguese coup took place in 1974. The people in Maputo staged a militant general strike to block the local colonialists' last desperate effort to resist independence, but they nonetheless lacked the long experience of life in the northern liberated zones. A factory worker here explained, "We had heard of Frelimo, but we knew very little about them. The PIDE [Portuguese secret police] made sure no one talked about Frelimo."

Yet many people did not hesitate to

rally to the new government. Julio Alberto Ubisse, an energetic, balding man in his 40s, lives in Bairro Hulene, a section of the cane city near the airport with 36,000 residents. Ubisse quickly realized that the new government—afflicted from the start by an exodus of skilled workers, sabotage and armed attacks from Ian Smith's Rhodesia—could direct few resources to the *bairro*. So he and other like-minded people took action themselves.

The conditions in Bairro Hulene were not auspicious. There were two primary schools, a handful of widely scattered water taps, no clinics, and no market. "We had to go down to the *baixo* [in the cement city] to shop," Ubisse remembered. "A black person was only permitted to build a reed house. If he built one of cement, the colonialists came and tore it down. Some of the colonialists owned the land here, and we had to pay rent to a *senhor*. A few roads were paved, but that was only to facilitate the movement of the police."

Ubisse and the other members of the *bairro's circulo*, or municipal Frelimo committee, described social life before independence as tense and full of mutual suspicion—an atmosphere common to many third world shantytowns. "There were many *bandidos* here," the committee agreed. "There were *prostitutas*. Peo-

ple were afraid to go out at night. Everyone lived apart."

Today, Hulene is totally organized down to the household level. Each group of ten families elects a *responsavel* (literally, a "responsible"), who then represents them at the next highest level, the "cell." Each cell has between 600 and 2,000 members: together they constitute the *circulo*. "A problem that the small group cannot handle is passed up to the cell, or higher," Ubisse explained. "It is a dynamic process, a new process."

He went on animatedly, "We have a new life together. If one person reads a newspaper, he discusses it with his neighbors. If someone is unemployed, the neighbors help him set up a stall in our new market. Or, if they work in a factory, they ask around if there is a job for him. There are no longer people sitting around the *bairro* with nothing to do, with no one taking an interest in them. So [he gestured expansively] there are no more *bandidos*."

The rest of the *circulo*, who had remained silent during the secretary's peroration, burst into laughter of pleased agreement.

The group received their visitor in a simple cement building with a packed sand floor. The walls were decorated with bright Frelimo posters and slogans. Ubisse said, "This used to be the house of a

colonialist. He had a shop here, exploited us, and then moved to a better place in the cement city."

Two of the eight *circulo* members were middle-aged women, who sat quietly together at one end of the wooden table. The visitor directed his next question to them, a broad enquiry about the role of women in the *bairro*. They shifted shyly in their seats, glancing toward Ubisse for assistance.

The irrepressible secretary paused, apparently discomfited, and then spoke again: "The women dynamize many things. Against prostitution. For sanitation. They fight against polygamy, which in the colonial time exploited women. They work in factories. They go on security patrols. They do everything men do now. Anything is possible when the women are organized."

Ubisse and the rest of the committee then took their visitor on a walking tour. One block up the sandy street, he pointed to a new, 30-foot tank, from which water is piped to many new taps. "We don't have to walk so far now," he said. The next stop was a spacious cultural hall, with a stage at one end. "We built it ourselves," Ubisse said. "We didn't ask anything from the government. We put on plays, concerts, showed films here and sold tickets to raise money."

He added with pride, "We even have a bank account. When we need money for the hall, we take it from there." The committee murmured with a sense of wonder; people like them now had bank accounts.

Ubisse guided the party past a community workshop, where a few men were constructing cement washbasins; across a plaza with a wooden platform at one end, used for *bairro*-wide meetings; then to a buyers' cooperative, which helps alleviate the intermittent shortages of essentials; and from there to the new market, which was clean and brimming with fresh vegetables. All these improvements were made since the *tempo colonialista*, as the Portuguese era is known.

Near the soccer field, people in the *bairro* have set up two cooperatives to raise ducks and rabbits. Ubisse was upset that the rabbit shed was locked, but he eagerly encouraged the visitor to peer between the wooden slats for a glimpse of the small animals. "This is to overcome the problem of the shortage of meat," he explained, nodding with approval as the rabbits nibbled at greens.

The last stop—and in many ways the most impressive—was the clothing cooperative. A group of women produce *capulanas* and children's clothing for sale. They have re-invested their earnings, and now own 10 foot-powered sewing machines. "At night, the building becomes an adult education school," Ubisse said. "They learn to sew, sell, read and write—all in this same building."

It came time for the visitor to depart. The committee was disappointed; he had still not seen the five new schools—four primary and one secondary—the libraries, the health clinic.

Combatting snakes in the grass.

Hulene is a model *bairro*, and has been described approvingly in the local press. Its achievements are almost certainly greater than average. But there is little doubt that in other *bairros* in the reed city, in the slowly increasing number of

Neighborhood groups among other things try to help the jobless, either by sponsoring them in one of many new markets or asking around for factory work.





Tami Hultman/Africa News

Frelimo's charismatic leader, Samora Machel, has launched a personal campaign against inefficiencies.

communal villages in the countryside, and in Mozambique generally, the revolution is mobilizing people in areas untouched during the war.

There is also little doubt that this process is by and large being carried out humanely, with a minimum of coercion. Five years after independence, Mozambique continues to face daunting problems that have been aggravated recently by a widespread drought in the central and southern provinces. Nonetheless, there is no significant opposition to the revolutionary government from anywhere within the country; there is no sullen body of the disaffected. (The Mozambique Resistance Movement, a small right-wing band, is still carrying out armed attacks in the center, but it depends totally on South Africa and the colonial exiles there for arms and funds. Security remains tight, and there are many roadblocks, manned by efficient, courteous soldiers.)

Even though the government retains its popularity, it insists the revolution is threatened by internal enemies, to whom it gives the generic name *Xiconhocas* (pronounced Shi-con-YO-has, the word means snakes-in-the-grass.) *Xiconhoca* is portrayed as a slovenly, unshaven black man, glowering out from posters. He sometimes wears platform shoes and other items of hip attire. He drinks, with a penchant for expensive imported whiskey, and he also smokes marijuana. He is sometimes accompanied by his girlfriend, who has straightened hair and wears a mini-skirt.

Xiconhoca often works in government offices, where he treats the public rudely. He keeps them waiting and at times blows cigarette smoke in their faces. Last year, he deliberately sabotaged a bus by driving his car into it; recently, he intentionally started an uncontrolled brush fire in a rural area. Even more ominously, Ian Smith used to telephone him regularly with instructions on how to aid the Rhodesian invaders.

The sins of *Xiconhoca* have a basis in reality. Maputo was once the brothel of southern Africa, and the government's puritanism is meant to foster revolutionary fervor in place of imported styles and colonial indolence. The criticism of arrogant state employees is prompted by another bitter legacy of colonialism: a swollen, unwieldy and insensitive bureau-

cracy. And Rhodesian raids were a critical problem until this February, some hitting targets within 100 miles of Maputo.

Nonetheless, there is a regrettably dogmatic aspect to the *Xiconhoca* campaign. Some hapless functionary struggling with the new ideas that his relatively advanced level of education does not entitle him to act in a superior way is not the equivalent of a Rhodesian agent. And the other side of the *Xiconhoca* coin is a relentlessly exhortatory style of government, promulgated by a press that is unabashedly at the service of the revolution, and including lavish praise for the president, Samora Machel.

All power to the party.

The government's approach is in part a consequence of its centralized structure. In 1977, Frelimo converted itself from a "front" to the "party of the worker-peasant alliance." It automatically accepted previous members and vigorously enrolled new ones: yet it intentionally remains a small, vanguard party. Its present membership is unclear, but the figure of 20,000 has been suggested—in a nation of 12 million.

The Frelimo Party is superior to the state, which is considered a questionable institution because all classes are represented in it. Within the party, the mode of organization is described frankly as "democratic centralism." The central committee's report to the 1977 party congress, which approved the change from front to party, argued, "The party will only be able to realize [its] objectives if its directorate is centralized, if the party has at its disposal a command structure capable of directing all of its organizations, a center that expresses the will of all, their consciousness and class interests."

The party proposed the candidates to the largest government organ, the People's Assembly, even though the voters had the right—which they did exercise—to veto candidates. In practice, though, the assembly meets infrequently, and it usually ratifies decisions already made by the central committee.

One need not be an advocate of Western-style democracy to see flaws in Frelimo's approach. It is probable that most party members are—just as Frelimo says they should be—"the most conscious,

Continued on page 14

The re-education camps

By Allen Isaacman and
Barbara Isaacman

MAPUTO, MOZAMBIQUE

Sebastiao Facucane and Azarias Nyantumbo are typical of the men we met at the Msawize re-education center. The first foreign journalists to visit any of the centers housing persons detained for political offenses, we talked to many of the inmates, without interpreters, and people spoke openly about their experience.

Facucane told us he had served in the Portuguese secret police (PIDE) for more than 15 years, interrogating Mozambicans accused of nationalist sympathies. Nyantumbo had volunteered for the elite Portuguese commando force responsible for atrocities against the civilian population, including the notorious massacre at Wiriyamu.

We had heard rumors and read Western press accounts of harsh conditions and brutality in Mozambique's re-education centers, which invited comparison, it was said, with Siberian labor camps. What we actually saw at Msawize when we arrived there—after a long, dusty ride by land-rover—was completely unexpected. The sentries at the rope gate were detainees, and the only weapon we saw throughout our visit was in the hands of a camp resident going off to hunt for food. The center had no armed guards, no dogs, no barbed wire fences and no cells.

The center's 33-year-old commandant and his eight assistants mingled with the detainees. When we pressed him about the lax security, he acknowledged that when the center had first opened in 1977, there had been a number of unsuccessful escape attempts. But the remoteness of the center and the speed with which neighboring peasants reported the fugitives to authorities soon convinced the detainees of the futility of such attempts.

The political background of the prisoners at Msawize makes it unique among the camps. Detainees who had been held at other centers told us that most of the people there had been arrested for theft or related crimes. Ramon Sainda, a merchant caught selling stolen property, and Ricardo Mungey, accused of embezzling \$12,000 from the factory he managed, were typical of the residents at the Chibutu center, while at Inhassane most were "marginals"—unemployed petty criminals—detained for theft, adultery and vagrancy.

Nevertheless, conditions at the various centers were remarkably similar. Inmates are organized into a series of brigades. Brigade members, who live and work together, are responsible for each other's welfare and for deciding how fellow members who infringe the camp codes should be disciplined.

A typical day begins at 4:30 a.m. After an hour of exercise, followed by breakfast, the brigades start their assigned tasks. Most residents farm, but we observed smaller groups constructing houses, forging hoes, weaving and repairing roads. All the brigades, including those clearing fields a few kilometers from the camp, are unsupervised, although each had a "responsible" elected from among its members. The two hours before lunch are devoted to literacy classes and political education. The afternoon schedule includes a discussion of the day's national and international news, a work stint, showers and supper. After dinner there are sports and cultural activities. This routine is repeated without variation Monday through Saturday morning.

Conditions are harsh, though food, primarily corn porridge and relish, is no worse than the diet of most rural Mozambicans. Housing and health facilities are rudimentary, but comparable to those we observed in rural communities throughout the country.

The most startling fact about the re-

education centers is the lack of coercion. None has barbed wire, high walls or even gates, and the detainees told us that they had never suffered or witnessed corporal punishment. Problems such as petty thefts, fights and laziness are resolved at weekly brigade meetings where members recommend appropriate action to the commandant. Extra work, in one form or another, on Saturday afternoon or Sunday, is the typical punishment.

Detainees maintain contact with their families through periodic visits and uncensored correspondence. A number of residents indicated that they were allowed to go periodically to the provincial capital to spend two weeks with their wives. The only constraint was that they had to report daily to local government authorities.

The centers aim at reintegrating detainees into Mozambican society through the twin mechanisms of literacy training and political education. At the time of independence it was estimated that 95 percent of the population was illiterate.

Although exact statistics are unavailable, officials of Mozambique's Justice Ministry say the reeducation centers are in the process of being phased out. They emphasize that the camps were established as a temporary measure to fill a vacuum created by the paralysis of the colonial legal system and the flight of almost all judges on the eve of independence. During the past year at least three centers have been closed, and 2,000 inmates—close to 50 percent of all detainees—including several hundred political offenders, have returned to Mozambican society.

More than 600 former re-education center members and their families have joined together to establish the new "city" of Unango in Niassa province, while hundreds of others have gone back to their home communities.

Justice officials concede that there were abuses in the uncertain period after independence. Local vigilance groups, police, soldiers and rural administrators sometimes overstepped their authority. Direct intervention by President Machel in 1977 ended most of these abuses but not before a number of Mozambicans were arbitrarily arrested and sent without trial to the centers for an indefinite period.

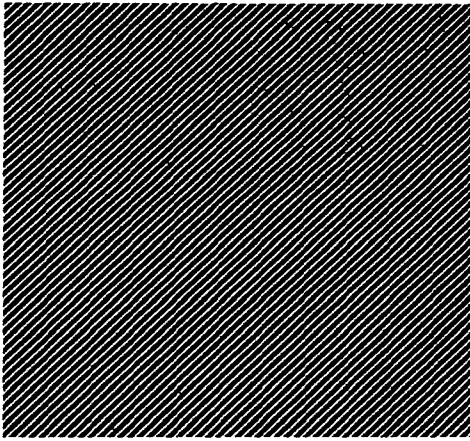
New judicial procedures have been developed since the establishment of the popular tribunals in 1978. (Mozambique appears to have very few criminals—there are currently 3,800 people in jail, either convicted or awaiting trial, out of a population of 12 million.) Since then, those accused of crimes have been publicly tried and, if found guilty, given determinate sentences that are served in Mozambique's prisons. ■ Allen and Barbara Isaacman, who have worked and traveled extensively in Mozambique, returned from there most recently in September.



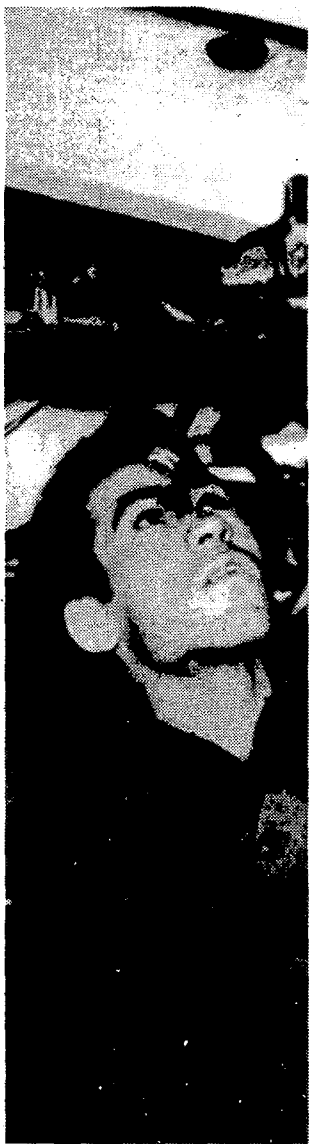
Tami Hultman/Africa News

POST—PROSPEI

The lessons of social democracy in Europe



Diana JOHNSTONE



EUROPEAN SOCIAL DEMOCRACY is in trouble. In the late '70s, Social Democrats and Labourites lost power to conservatives in Sweden and Britain. In Latin Europe, Socialists and the left in general have suffered setbacks. In West Germany, the Social Democratic Party remains in power, but practices an increasingly conservative economic policy. Only Austria is governed by a Social Democratic Party still practicing traditional social democratic policies.

Economic stagnation is undermining the financial bases of Europe's advanced health coverage, retirement and other social security systems. The Social Democratic parties and labor unions that can largely claim credit for obtaining these benefits in prosperous times have so muted any critical analysis of the capitalist system that they have been intellectually disarmed by the crisis. Some are realizing that their optimism about the capitalist system was misplaced.

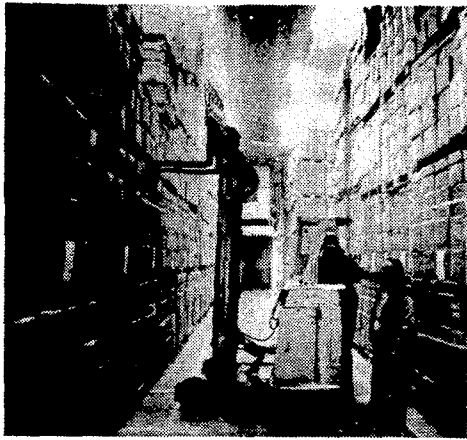
The welfare state rests on an accommodation between labor, private capital and the state. Private capital retains control of the productive process, but bargains with organized labor on wages and some aspects of working conditions. The state is given growing control over redistribution of income through collective consumption of a broad range of amenities. But of the three partners, only private capital has the mobility to sneak off and leave the other two holding the bag. The growth of the multinationals tends to take the taxable economic base ever farther out of reach of the welfare state. The whole trend is for private capital to move away from investing in job-producing industries in the developed countries.

Thus, in Scandinavia the Social Democratic labor movement has started trying to devise ways of guiding investment into job-producing activities.

But like the Democratic Party in the U.S., many social democratic parties have initially been more sensitive to their middle-class constituencies than to labor. Organized labor cannot, of course, afford to see its ranks thinned out by deindustrialization, its pension funds bankrupted and its solidarity split apart by massive unemployment. But when revenues stagnate and governments raise taxes to pay for welfare benefits that continue to mount, notably for unemployment compensation, this can start to crack the social consensus, splitting the middle classes and some better-off segments of the working class from the part of the population in growing need of assistance.

By having chosen, in times of economic boom, to fight not only for higher wages for union members, but also for important social benefits extending to the entire population, the European Social Democratic labor movement does not suffer from the political isolation today afflicting American labor. Such programs as public health insurance are important to everyone but a small minority of rich people. Moreover, the northern European working class as a whole enjoys far higher standards of physical, material and cultural well-being than the American working class, which is divided between well-paid elites and large underprivileged minorities. When put on the defensive, the European working class movement has more gains to defend and is in a stronger position to defend them.

Nevertheless, European social democracy suffers from certain weaknesses. The welfare state was based on compromise. In exchange for material benefits, Social Democratic labor leaders abandoned any sustained critical analysis of the corporate capitalist system. This is the real meaning of social democracy's formal rejection of Marxism. Marxism



has generally been rejected on the pretext that it implies anti-democratic political behavior of the type associated with orthodox communism. In fact, Marxism does not imply any particular politics, as quarrels between Marxists should make abundantly clear. But it does imply critical attention to the workings of capitalist society. By rejecting Marxism, the working class movement politely agrees to look the other way as capitalism goes about its business.

In practice, both pragmatic reformist and Marxist socialists have tended to advocate more or less Keynesian economic policies. The main difference is that those influenced by Marxism have been more alert to the tendency of capital to counterattack and undermine the gains made by working people.

Having failed to develop a critical analysis of the capitalist system, social democracy today has difficulty in coming up with a coherent logic to counter the capitalist logic expressed by the Milton Friedman school.

Throughout the '70s, much of the European left believed that social democracy was the capitalists' favored solution and opposed it accordingly. Recent events, including the election of Ronald Reagan in the U.S., have shaken that belief. It seems the capitalists may have something worse in mind. Thus social democracy's current troubles, in addition to their own difficulties in defining clear political alternatives, have led sections of the Marxist left to view social democracy with greater indulgence. In the labor movement in particular, there are some small signs of social democrats and Marxists getting together to share experience and ideas in the search for solutions to common problems.



Photo by WIDE WORLD

ITY POLITICS

THE "KEYNES PLUS" PROGRAM was elaborated last year by a Swede, Clas Erik Odhner, and other experts for the European Labor Research Institute to counter the onslaught of Friedman-style economic policies. The Danish trade union confederation LO persuaded the government of Anker Jorgensen to introduce a series of bills inspired by "Keynes Plus," but the government watered them down until they were almost unrecognizable, and then backed away from putting them to a vote of confidence. Jorgensen's failure to fight for the measures put a strain on party-union relations. But public opinion polls had shown that only a little more than 10 percent of the Danish population would have voted for "economic democracy" in a referendum.

SEN

In the following interview with the leading Italian journalist and member of parliament Luciana Castellina (PDUP, Democratic Party of Proletarian Unity), which was published in the Italian review *Pace e Guerra*, Paul Nyrup Rasmussen, study director for the Danish LO, explains Danish unionists' demands for economic democracy. The interview is an example of growing if still discreet efforts at dialogue between the poles of the authentic European workers movement represented here by Scandinavian Social Democracy and Italian Eurocommunism.

Rasmussen: The unions in our country are powerful, but if we stay within the limits of a simple fight for wages, the bosses are always stronger than we are. Because they are able to manipulate prices and thus wipe out our gains. Above all, they can cut back investments, especially those that might create jobs. That is why we find ourselves with growing unemployment—7.5 percent in Denmark.

So it becomes fundamental for us to have job-creating investments. And that can only be achieved through what we call "economic democracy," that is, a way of taking part in decisions on what to do with profits.

We proposed that a share of the added value, as calculated from the total wages paid by each firm, be transferred annually to an Investment and Jobs Fund owned and run by the workers. Workers could also set up Company Funds for investment in their own workplace. At first we suggested that the amount for the Fund be 10 percent of total wages, but then we agreed to let the percentage be figured on net profit before taxes.

Castellina: But the workers would be a minority on the board for a long time. How could they decide investments if the majority of shareholders didn't go along?

Rasmussen: We are aware workers will be in the minority and thus dependent. But this could be the start of participation in decision-making and it's the only realistic possibility today.

Castellina: Checking a firm's books is not easy and one is almost always given the runaround. There is the risk of presenting the workers with a deficit for which they are not responsible and may not really exist.

Rasmussen: Checking books is in fact hard. But our proposals include laws aimed at setting down just how they are to be kept so as to make them more transparent. Moreover, if the workers of a particular company were faced with a deficit it would not affect their salaries. Wage levels would continue to be set by national collective conventions.

Castellina: Isn't there a danger that the union, which should represent workers' interests in opposition to employers, will itself become an employer, with all the negative effects that follow, as with the Israeli Histadruth?

Rasmussen: Yes, but the Fund should not

be managed so as to expand production as it is with private capital, but rather to set a new economic course, a new development model. It's not simple and your objections are valid, but if we let things go on like this, we'll never have power over economic policy.

Castellina: What do you mean when you speak of managing the collective fund's capital in a qualitatively different way?

Rasmussen: All we know clearly is that not only the boss should decide. Indeed, we don't yet know very well what we should decide, what should be produced, where to invest. We have some ideas: projects to protect the environment and save energy, a joint venture between the private and public sectors in the electronic and computer industries and for managing services, for example.

Castellina: In short, you mean that the central fund should set out to run a sector of the economy freed from the laws of the market and even try to condition them.

Rasmussen: More or less...

Castellina: Here we may be getting to the heart of the problem: can the market still be considered a rational way to regulate the economy? It's a point that social democratic culture has always avoided.

Rasmussen: We don't intend to give in to all the laws of the market. When we speak of decisions on investments that should be socialized and of setting dif-



not so much that it is not socialist, as that its very reformist projects are not sufficiently grounded and consistently thought through." After pointing to various weaknesses, von Oertzen concluded, "The program's decisive flaw is its unfounded optimism. The program is simply inadequate to deal with a real economic crisis... Without strict economic guidance and socialization of key industries, a social democratic economics minister is powerless in case of emergency."

Thanks to Germany's economic success, in particular on the world market, it has taken 20 years for the SPD's economic optimism to start to fade, but no sooner had Chancellor Helmut Schmidt's SPD-Free Democratic coalition government won re-election Oct. 5 than the bad



ferent priorities, those are alternatives to the market.

AT ITS BAD GODESBERG CONGRESS in 1959, the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) formally abandoned Marxism—which in practice it had abandoned long before. Only 16 of the 340 delegates voted against abandonment. One of these was a young Socialist, Peter von Oertzen (see interview), who explained he did not agree with radicals who accused the SPD of "betraying socialism," as the party had long since ceased to be socialist.

"In our present situation," wrote Peter von Oertzen in 1959, "in which neither social democracy nor the organized work force in its majority has a socialist consciousness, democratic and social reform is the only possible practical policy. Our objection to the Godesberg program is

news began to pour in. Experts forecast minimal, perhaps zero economic growth for next year. Productive investment is at a standstill, and unemployment is expected to rise to well over one million. The West German trade deficit stands at 30 billion marks, and the public debt is at 435 billion marks, or 30 percent of the GNP. The Deutsche Mark, until recently considered as good as gold, began to falter. East German moves to restrict traffic in the wake of the Polish strikes seemed to threaten lucrative Eastern trade.

Bonn government officials got together with leaders of the German Trade Union Federation (DGB) to extract commitments to go easy on wage demands. But SPD finance minister Hans Matthofer left union demands for an investment program to create jobs unanswered. Few SPD critics saw any hope that the SPD would change its course.

Peter VON OERTZEN

Peter von Oertzen, the Godesberg dissident, is chairman of the Hannover district of the SPD, with 60,000 members. He recently gave this interview to *In These Times*.

ITT: You seem to represent the left of the SPD. Is that a Marxist left?

Von Oertzen: Oh no. It's questionable whether there is any left in German Social Democracy. But if there is a left, then you have to differentiate between several currents. There is an old-fashioned left wing social democratic tendency, the so-called "old socialists." Then there is a tendency you could compare with American liberals—civil rights people, left Christians, pacifists, ecologists and so on—we say in Germany "left liberals." And then we have the younger Marxist tendencies in the party and within the trade union movement, with its hard core in the different factions of the Young Socialist movement.

ITT: So which are you?

Von Oertzen: A little of them all. In my own political career I'm an old socialist, as an intellectual, I feel very close to the left liberal mind, and I have connections with the new left currents of non-dogmatic Marxism in and out of the SPD.

ITT: How would you describe the achievements of the SPD?

Von Oertzen: The primary achievement since 1969 was enlargement of the social security system, without touching the position of West German capitalism, financed by revenues from the government and the social security institution itself. The reform policy of growing public allocation of GNP was stymied by the 1973 world economic crisis, and now there is no possibility of further extending social security. From 1969 to 1973, we had important improvements in real incomes, not only extension of social security but also of cultural possibilities, reform of the school system, improvement of the economic conditions of scholars and students and so on. After the crisis of 1973-74, we have had a rather successful policy of smoothing the results of the crisis, with further enlargement of the public share of GNP, but no longer with the target of social reforms but only to smooth the results of the crisis, to avoid hardships.

ITT: How are union leaders reacting to efforts to hold down wages?

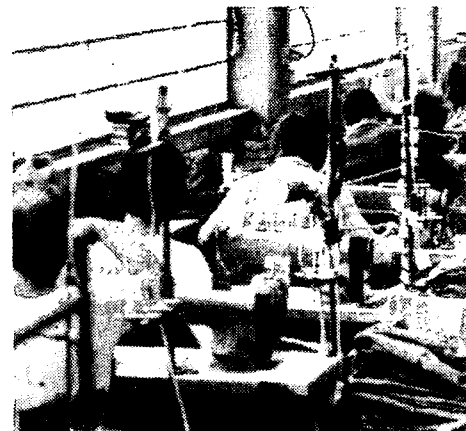
Von Oertzen: The DGB leadership has agreed to a policy that may mean a very slow improvement of wages, the stagnation of wages, but not their reduction. A real reduction in the wages of German workers, like the most recent developments in the U.S., would mean a very hard union struggle.

ITT: Could this crisis push German workers to the left?

Von Oertzen: Class conflicts will become sharper. I wouldn't dare to say if the labor movement will turn to the left. A part, yes. But maybe not a majority. The problem is that the German left does not agree on the answers to these questions.

ITT: There is interest abroad in SPD foreign policy, especially towards the Third World. Has the Brandt Commission Report (directed by SPD and Socialist In-

Continued on page 15



LETTERS

IN THESE TIMES is an independent newspaper committed to democratic pluralism and to helping build a popular movement for socialism in the United States. Our pages are open to a wide range of views on the left, both socialist and non-socialist. Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and are not necessarily those of the editors. We welcome comments and opinion pieces from our readers.

ZIONISTS AND ZIONISTS

I AGREE WITH MUCH OF DIANA JOHNSTONE's assessment of the recent explosions in front of a Paris synagogue (*ITT*, Oct. 29), but I feel that she makes certain misleading assumptions. By constantly emphasizing the "ultra-Zionism" of Begin and the "highly divisive slogans" of Jewish Renewal, Johnstone implies that there are no left-wing Jews who, as socialists and Zionists, believe in the existence of a Jewish state. Zionism is not solely the Begin government. There are many Jewish progressive voices crying out in Israel and the diaspora for a just solution to the plight of the Palestinians as well as for renewal of a socialist Israel.

In answer to the left-wing Jews quoted in Johnstone's article who call for a pluralist society in Israel as in France, I find it hard to discount the experience of previous Jewish leftists who felt that anti-Semitism would disappear when right-wing fanatics and capitalists were laid to rest. The experience of World War II destroyed much of that argument. While we, as socialists, must strive for an egalitarian society wherever we live, it's dishonest to ignore the lessons of history by not recognizing the importance of a Jewish state.

While I stand in sharp disagreement with Jews in France and elsewhere who equate the PLO with the Nazis, and while I believe in the importance of both liberation struggles—the Jews' and the Palestinians'—until the PLO publicly denounces its call for the extinction of the Jewish state, I understand that Israel cannot move further toward recognition of a Palestinian state. That issue, though exacerbated by the inhuman policies of the Begin government, is still an issue the left has ignored. We must not lose sight of the fact that Begin is not synonymous with Zionism. Those of us on the left must distinguish between a people's struggle

and a particular government's policies—especially a government like Begin's, which currently has little popular support and will soon be voted out of power.

—Jo-Ann Mort
New York

ANTI-SEMITIC LEFT?

ANTI-SEMITIC FEELINGS IN FRANCE are not the exclusive result of the neo-Nazi movement there. Much of the blame must also go to the European left. The European left has strongly preached anti-Zionism. Meanwhile, the average citizen has blurred the distinction between Jew and Zionist. Indeed, the Zionists that founded Israel were atheistic socialists. But many religious Jews strongly support Israel's existence and right to secure borders, as do their socialist brothers and sisters.

But the terrorists who kill Jews do not bother to ask the political beliefs of their victims. In Belgium, one Arab accused of killing six Hasidic Jewish children by bombing a school bus told police, "It's not as if I hurt anyone. I only killed Jews."

A French school teacher told her class that it was deplorable that anyone would place a bomb in the middle of the street where innocent people could get hurt. Her students correctly questioned if she was implying that the Jews in the synagogue were somehow guilty.

More than 80 percent of the French gentiles polled recently said that they believe Jews in France are more loyal to Israel than to France. So when Giscard d'Estaing attacks Israel and "the Zionists" many French lump the Jews in France in with the Israelis.

There is a double-standard going on, not just among the right or the Giscardists. The European left will condemn the murder of innocent civilians by the neo-fascists, yet lay silent as Arab nationalists murder Jews inside Israel and in Europe. And nowhere in

In These Times do you read that the neo-Nazi groups in France have been funded by Arab nationalists. Genuine anti-Jewish feelings are being conveniently disguised under the banner of anti-Zionism. And it doesn't matter whether your politics are on the left or the right. Anti-Semitism is a bi-partisan issue. It was in Hitler's Germany and it is today.

The classic European socialist doctrine tells us that the Jews are not a nation and therefore have no right to a country. "Their best hope is to assimilate."

I believe that socialists in America should reject the European view of Jews, Judaism and Israel. And we should be suspicious of the attempts by Arabs, who have denied freedom and economic justice to their own people, to convince us that Zionism, therefore Judaism, is racist and should be exterminated.

—Bruce H. James
Arlington, Va.

Diana Johnstone replies: Certainly, the overwhelming majority of Europeans, including the French, Jews and non-Jews alike, consider Israel's right to existence absolutely beyond question. But this virtual unanimity does not extend to approval of every aspect of policy of the current government of that state.

I would only caution my fellow-Americans against the temptation to revert to the traditional and comforting view of Europe as the irretrievable site of corruption and original sin, compared to a United States of gleaming virtue and innocence. This, I fear, is precisely the view that is likely to be promoted in a Reagan America intent on regaining world primacy.

A FRIEND INDEED!

I DO NOT WISH TO ENGAGE IN POLEMICS, but Stephen Lerner's letter (*ITT*, Nov. 5) requires a reply.

Since I "must know something that the bosses of Southern factories don't," allow me to express something that the "Northern" bosses do!

First, the article by Michael Myerson, "The ILGWU, a union that fights for lower wages," originally published in *Ramparts*, is exemplary and vindicates my affirmations. Readers who are curious may obtain reprints from The New England Free Press.

Although the article deals only with the time period associated with former ruler David Dubinsky, and not with that of their current helmsman, Sol Chaikin, it remains valid.

Lerner's prose neither contradicts it, nor the experience of tens of thousands of doubly exploited workers.

Second, Barbara Koeppel writing in the *Progressive*, November 1978, "The New Sweatshops," gives some more examples of the labor-peace theme, class collaboration nature of the ILGWU.

Although a union organizer is "not clear why thousands of unionized firms [go] South and move abroad," I am! And so are tens of thousands of workers. I could suggest a reading list dealing with this question, but for openers I'll mention the Keyserling study, of which Stephen is probably aware.

Oh, yes! If the labor movement had more friends like Duarte, it would be much better off. Believe me; I wouldn't lie to you.

—C. Bento Duarte
Elizabeth, N.J.

NO SHILL

A BOOK REVIEW UNDER MY BYLINE (*ITT*, Nov. 5) was not printed as I wrote it. In fact, your editorial process belied the principle stated on page 23 of that same issue: "Except for editorial statements appearing on the editorial page, opinions expressed in columns and in feature or news stories are those of the author and not necessarily those of the editors." My review of Victor Navasky's *Naming Names*, when it left my hands, was my critical response; the

printed review represented the opinion of its editor.

I had endeavored to present a balanced, objective critique of Navasky's book. I presumed that when I was invited to write the review it was because my expertise and judgment on the subject of the blacklist in Hollywood was respected. In my judgment, Navasky had written a book containing much valuable information. I also expressed some reservations about his explanations and interpretations. As I read the printed version, I noticed that the editor, who had been content with polishing the prose of the complimentary portion, perceptibly became a censor. My reservations were either eliminated or reworded to sound complimentary. A mixed review had become a laudatory review. Not even limitations of space can excuse such a transmogrification. I share the editors' desire that the readers of *In These Times* read *Naming Names*. I do not, however, want to appear as a shill for it.

—Larry Cepclair
Los Angeles

Pat Aufderheide replies: I was responsible for a clumsy and insensitive job of editing, one that badly changed meaning, though my original intention was to edit for tone and not content. I did attempt to get in touch with the author, and the fact that I hadn't by deadline time got lost in production pressure. My apologies to both critic and author.

HARD UP?

IS IN THESE TIMES SO HARD UP FOR money that it prefers to take 35¢ per word for sexist classifieds to promoting non-sexist advertising? I refer all readers to the personals section of the Classified in *ITT*, Nov. 5. I strongly suggest that "no junkies, wives, mothers, mystics, health addicts" or people with progressive politics subscribe to your newspaper unless you find it important to keep your stated politics consistent with your classified advertising.

—Ann Williams
Chicago

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

YOUR COVERAGE OF PRO- AND ANTI-choice politics in regard to the abortion issue has been good; however, I would like to point out a problem with terminology. In *These Times*, as well as other media, continue to dignify the anti-choice forces with the terms "right-to-life," "pro-life" and "pro-family," which are the terms they themselves use. This tends, I think, to obscure their real nature and to lull the reader and citizen to sleep. At least, it seems to have had this effect on me for a long time. As a woman who had an illegal abortion before 1973, I should know better.

The anti-choice people are not pro-life or pro-family. They are anti-choice, anti-woman, and pro-slavery, for what is it but slavery when a woman is denied control of her own body, and when she is forced into a particular occupation (motherhood) against her will?

A constitutional amendment to prohibit abortion is in fact an amendment to repeal the right of the female sex to life and liberty. This is as much a fundamental denial of human rights as the draft or military aid to foreign dictatorships.

The anti-choice forces must be vigorously opposed, and their true nature exposed by the responsible media, or they will succeed in subjecting women to slavery.

—Ann Tattersall
Eugene, Ore.

Editor's note: Please try to keep letters under 250 words in length. Otherwise we may have to make drastic cuts, which may change what you want to say. Also, if possible, please type and double-space letters—or at least write clearly and with wide margins.

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Kenneth V. Cockrel,
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STKC

KATE ELLIS

Violence against women and man's basic purpose

ONE SIGN OF THE CURRENT state of the women's movement is the number of jobs it supports. Working as clerical organizers and welfare advocates, feminist therapists and affirmative action officers, defending lesbian mothers and victims of sexual harassment, providing day care and health services, the women who are being drawn into the



changing it. The issue of domestic violence, even more than those of job equality, gives women an opportunity to apply feminist principles unambiguously on the job. When Redstockings was formed in 1969 their statement of principles contained the following:

We take the women's side in everything. We ask not if something is "reformist," "radical," "revolutionary" or "moral." We ask: is it good or bad for women?

workforce are, in some ways, first she said: "The nature of the male self is that it takes. It is the absolute self that has the absolute right to take what it needs." She then went Descartes one better: "I want and I am entitled to have therefore I am."

Dworkin touched many nerves in this speech, especially in an audience that has seen, and probably also directly experienced, male violence. More than most, we were acutely conscious of the power of men to engender fear "in a whole class of persons, of a whole class

sister then contacted their father, who told the speaker he would have nothing to do with her until she apologized. Thinking of the denials that go on in my own family, I was amazed and admiring.

What I saw and heard on this panel was something I want from the battering movement, and from the feminist movement as it heads into the '80s. One could say that our sexist society had done its worst to these women. And yet, with the help of other women, they had pulled self esteem from the depths of their, and our, worst nightmares. And it was a self esteem that did not sustain itself by denying humanity to half the race because of its gender.

A note that I heard repeatedly throughout the conference was that we can't wait for legal remedies, not to mention legislative ones. We need change now. This urgency is at the center of feminism because feminism is a movement that deals with pain and pain can't wait. Yet wait it must. Healing runs on its own clock. Women have always been told to be patient, and as a result we have stamina. The words of Andrea Dworkin offer immediate relief from pain. But to get that relief we must believe that men are a master race that has always been in control of everything.

The sense under which this wing of the women's movement is operating is that things are going to hell in a basket: Before the first *Playboy* in 1953, our newsstands were free of pornography. Now it is everywhere. A woman is raped, says the FBI, every eight minutes. Tight, uncomfortable jeans and spike heels are being forced on us with the insistence of

blot out everything else, but if this were the whole story, our movement would be failing badly. Yet when I look at my own life and my own feelings, I know we are not failing. When a woman is raped she is helpless and in danger. But rape is not a metaphor for all of female experience. We are not always helpless, though in these difficult times when every aspect of female sexuality is being questioned, pulled up from its traditional procreative roots, and fed to the corporate lions, it is tempting to pull back into that old, safe space.

What has happened, I think, is that feminism has been drawn into the process of capitalism that Marx so admired: its capacity to tear down and reconstitute its base, both social and economic, again and again. Therefore, just as socialists have recognized the possibilities as well as the oppression of the capitalist marketplace, so we must now include the feminist recognition that, in the sphere of social relations (which are increasingly coextensive with domestic relations) there are two sides to the much celebrated "freedom" that characterizes the sexual marketplace.

This is precisely what Dworkin and her sympathizers refuse to acknowledge. Their vision of female life as rape is the antithesis of the worship of heterosexuality put forth by the dominant culture, but it is no more the whole truth than the vision of heterosexual bliss that it challenges.

I am inclined to go along with historians of the family who say that domestic violence has declined over time. Lloyd deMause, for instance, after citing current child abuse statistics, posits that there was a point in history "where most children were what we would now consider abused." Certainly there was a point in history where wives were the property of their husbands and were sold and beaten without arousing public outrage. Behavior gets noticed when it is no longer accepted as an operating principle of a particular age.

This is not to minimize the horrors with which the battering movement is dealing on a day-to-day basis. But where male domination (a metaphoric form of ownership in the absence of the real thing) is losing its social base, when it is becoming a public problem rather than an unquestioned private reality, its value in the sexual marketplace is rapidly declining. Women are now saying ("in numbers too great to ignore") that they don't like it, and some men are punishing them for that. But it's not getting rewarded the way it used to, and for that we feminists should take our fair share of the credit.



The battering movement, as it is called, continues this militantly pro-woman line as a guideline for its day-to-day practice.

The strength of this single issue movement was visible at the Second Annual Conference on Violence Against Women, held in Denver in September. Drawn together by common work, 750 women came to hear Andrea Dworkin and to spend three days in panels and workshops discussing client-worker relationships and relationships among those engaged in "sheltering." The geographical distribution of the participants was not wide, testimony to the fact that, unlike minorities, feminist institutions often cannot fund staff travel to conferences.

It is not difficult to understand why women who have daily contact with the most openly damaging aspects of heterosexuality would identify the power residing in men by reason of their gender as the source of the problems they see. Some 70 percent of the women who come to a shelter for the first time return to their battering relationships. And 90 percent of those relationships resume their brutal form.

Nevertheless, the words of Andrea Dworkin, which I heard in the company of more than 1,000 cheering women, depressed me enormously. She enumerated seven strands of male power: the power of self, physical power over others, the power of terror, of naming, of owning, of money, and the power of sex. Of the

of persons." Yet to speak of terror, not only in terms of "the gun, the knife, the bomb," but also "the hidden symbol of terror, the penis," and then to say that "terror issues forth from the male and illuminates his social nature and his basic purpose" is to turn the world as I know it from color to black and white, an experience that sometimes literally accompanies acute depression.

"I think you're just upset by female anger," said a woman walking next to me on the Take Back the Night March that followed the talk. "Some women feel really threatened when they hear ideas that rock the boat." Could she be right? I wondered. One very thoughtful aspect of the conference was that places were set up where women could go and talk if anything they heard left them too upset or angry to go home, or on to the next workshop. Perhaps the lowest moment of my four days at Denver was the realization that I could not go there, that my pain would not be recognized as valid.

Fortunately for me, this low point was followed the next day by a panel I'll never forget, in which four victims of male violence spoke of their experiences. One woman, a victim of incest from the age of four, remembered nothing of that experience until she went into therapy. She then tried to contact her sister, whom she remembered being similarly abused, only to have her sister call her a liar. That

a rapist on a dark street as advertisers plaster the sides of buses with women spreading their legs, unbuttoning their blouses or sticking out their "rears," as Gloria Vanderbilt smilingly calls them. No day in the life of a working woman is free of sexual harassment.

Some of these changes involve changes in behavior, for which documentation is hard to come by, whereas others involve media representations of that behavior that can easily be documented. But the way one assesses the first change conditions one's view of the second. The line that predominated at the conference was that increasingly overt sexuality in the media, ranging from explicit sado-masochism to the woman who wears no underpants under those hideously tight jeans, has increased violence against women by suggesting that they enjoy a zipliss fuck at best, a knife in the back at worst.

At the conference, long slide shows on violence against women in the media and "clothing as violence against women" made this point. As it turned out, the only clothing that was "non-violent" was the carpenter pants and Birkenstock sandals that most of us were wearing. There is a problem with suggestive clothing, and with the ads that depict it: they push on us all the idea that sex is a quick and easy way to overcome an alienation that intensifies with awareness of itself. It is the nature of pain to expand and



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Frelimo

Continued from page 9

dedicated and disciplined militants." Nonetheless, such a concentration of power bears with it the likelihood of inefficiency, as no relatively small group, no matter how dedicated, can (or should) legislate effectively for 12 million people. There is also the potential for serious abuse. Tomorrow's *Xiconhocas* could turn out to be, say, sincere advocates of an agrarian program that the central committee decides against.

One consequence of the concentration of power is Samora Machel's "presidential offensive," which began earlier this year. Machel is an impressive and charismatic man, a compelling speaker who laces his talks with humor, enjoys the give-and-take with the crowds, and dresses often in combat fatigues. The similarity to Fidel Castro is unmistakable. Machel is taking personal action against the persistent inefficiency and laxity in government and other enterprises. Startled employees who show up late for work have found Samora waiting for them, pointing to his watch disapprovingly as they edge sheepishly by. This personal approach is certainly forceful, but it is no long-range substitute for mass organization.

The legacy of inefficiency.

For the time being, though, some degree of centralization is probably inevitable. The salient fact about Mozambique today is that a revolutionary government faced with monumental problems inher-



A cafe in Nampula.

ited from colonialism, and menaced by its apartheid neighbor, is attempting to solidify control over the two-thirds of the country it did not liberate (though there is no doubt Frelimo ultimately would have pushed all the way south to Maputo). Party members constantly bemoan the lack of veteran organizers. Militants are amazingly young—one encounters district officials in their 20s—and

their dedication cannot make up for their lack of experience.

Even so, there is widespread approval of the revolution's mobilization efforts. People asked to list areas of progress since independence give the expected answers—the dramatic improvement in education, for instance—and an unexpected one: organization. The sheer inefficiency of colonial rule—matters like tax collecting and forced labor aside—left a crippling legacy. Simply to keep Mozambique functioning requires something akin to military discipline.

Also, Frelimo is concentrating its efforts on building up a multitude of organizations that in time may well help to disperse power more widely. In towns, there are the *bairro* organizations. Many factories have established "production councils" that already facilitate an appreciable degree of workers' control. In the rural areas, the scattered peasants (80 percent of the total population) are being encouraged to form communal villages. Group living will hopefully promote collective production. Two mass organizations, for youth and for women, also should help encourage people to assert their voices in the revolution.

Frelimo justifies its vanguard role on the grounds that, even though it controls the state and the key sectors of the economy, the "class struggle" continues. Its fear seems exaggerated since the people most likely to welcome some form of colonial restoration—most, but not all of them, white—fled after independence. But, as has tragically happened elsewhere, the revolutionary process could produce new groups of people who would capture control of public enterprises and manage them to their own advantage. The danger, of course, is that the feared "new exploiters" could come from within the party itself. (Mozambique's "turn toward capitalism" recently heralded in

the Western press is an altogether different matter—a near-comic case of wishful misunderstanding. Thousands of small shop owners joined the post-independence exodus, paralyzing the distribution network, particularly in rural areas. The state, against its will, was forced to try and run the shops, and it has failed. Private businessmen now are being encouraged to take them off the government's hands.)

No small achievements.

In all Frelimo's remonstrances against the exploiters of the past, it has always identified them as "colonialists" and not as "whites." Today, Mozambicans are exceedingly careful to maintain this distinction. More than 90 percent of the 230,000 whites who remain do not suffer any kind of even informal retribution. A leading journalist, Leite Vasconcelos, who is white, said simply, "The ones who left were Portuguese. We are Mozambicans. There are still a few lingering aspects of racism, but it is no longer a social problem."

Another Frelimo achievement, and one almost without parallel in the Third World today, is the extent to which Mozambique has been able to maintain an independent international course. In a delightful irony, the Soviet Union's information center here has offices fronting on the re-named *Avenida Mao Tse-tung*. Mozambique has warm relations with the Soviet bloc, which helps train and equip its army. But it also maintains ties with China, and with the West; the Scandinavian countries are huge aid donors.

Aid is vitally important, as the country is still experiencing the crisis of a colonial economy. Before 1975, Mozambique derived close to half its foreign exchange from exporting labor to the South African mines and from rail and port service charges for Rhodesian and South African goods. After independence, South Africa sharply cut back its quota of Mozambican miners, and Mozambique closed its border with the Ian Smith regime. The precipitous fall in foreign exchange earnings has led inevitably to a shortage of imports—especially spare parts of all kinds—which drastically limits its economic recovery. A number of basic commodities, like soap, bread and matches, are often in short supply. Every afternoon, long *bichas* (lines) form outside the shops here, in which people for the most part wait cheerfully.

Jose Machungo, a 25-year-old musician, said the *bichas* are the biggest single problem here in the city. But he had no complaints. "People who are *consciente* understand why we have this problem," he said.

Two of Machungo's brothers joined the Frelimo party, but he was not interested. "It takes up too much time," he laughed. "I want to be free. Party members are extremely dedicated people; my brothers are busy every weekend."

At his office—he works at Radio Mozambique—prospective party members were required to present themselves to their colleagues. "We criticized some of them," he said. "Someone would say, 'That one helped the colonialists,' things like that. Only the ones we approved were allowed to join."

Machungo left school at age 11 due to a lack of money, then taught himself to play several instruments. He worked as an electrician's assistant by day, and he and his partner played in clubs after hours. "We played only foreign songs, *fados*," he explained. (The *fado* is the mournful Portuguese ballad.) "Our own culture was *proibida*."

Now, he sings about the new Mozambique. Many of his songs are in Portuguese, which the revolutionary government is necessarily promoting as the official language. He explained, "There are so many African languages here. If I meet someone from the north, the only way we can communicate is in Portuguese."

One of Jose Machungo's latest songs, which is played regularly over the radio, is an appeal to Mozambicans who have fled to South Africa and other bordering countries. "I encourage them to come back," he said. "I tell them we need them to help build up the country." ■

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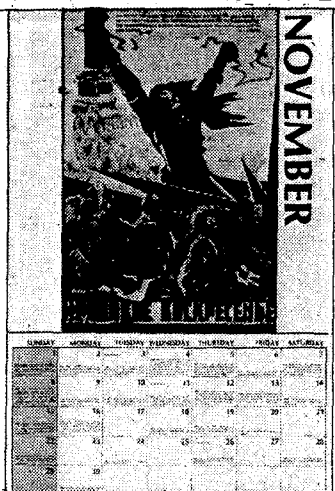
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POST-PROSPERITY POLITICS

Continued from page 11

ternational chairman Willy Brandt) had much impact here in Germany?

Von Oertzen: In Germany, it has had no real impact.

ITT: The Socialist International seems well to the left of Bonn.

Von Oertzen: Yes, especially in Latin America. German Social Democracy is the only organization within the International that has a real, effective instrument of international policy. And yes, we support the Sandinistas in Nicaragua, we support the left in Bolivia, we have close connections to the anti-imperialist nationalist parties of Central and South America, we have supported the Patriotic Front of Zimbabwe, we are improving our relations toward Mozambique and Angola, and are involved in more or less serious conflicts with North American policy in those places.

ITT: But the Bonn government's foreign policy is the same as the Americans'—when they vote in the International Monetary Fund and so on, they take a very conservative position.

Von Oertzen: The official policy of the Federal Republic of Germany within the IMF and the World Bank is one thing, and the politics of the Socialist International and Social Democracy in some developing countries is another. West German corporations have interests in exporting the capitalist economy, and no German government would dare to damage those interests. But there are also some political interests in strengthening the position of independent countries, of nonalignment between the Eastern and Western blocs. There are countries where there are no important West German capitalist interests. In those countries you can support independent revolutionary movements or independent revolutionary socialist governments. It would be very difficult to oppose the present Brazilian government because of the extended West German economic interests in Brazil. On the other hand, you can support Mugabe in Zimbabwe.

ITT: What about South Africa? I understand that Loderer, the head of the German metal workers, went to South Africa and came back saying it was a good thing for German capital to invest in South Africa.

Von Oertzen: That's typical of a leading German trade unionist. This opinion represents a great majority of West German trade unionists, especially within the branches that are exporting and investing capital abroad.

Detlev ALBERS

Detlev Albers, a young Bremen university professor, is an intellectual leader of one of the Marxist currents within the Young Socialists that is trying to develop a unitary program for the Marxist and reformist left in and around the SPD.

ITT: Do you see an opportunity for development of a different kind of economic policy within the SPD?

Albers: I think so. On the one hand, you can see a decision to make clearer alternative economic proposals. For example, a few days ago more than 30 members of the Bundestag, left Social Democrats, filed an open letter to Schmidt demanding finance policy alternatives involving deliberate deficit spending to lessen the risk of recession. The proposals were relatively modest, but they did question



government policy. On the other hand, the relative weight of the left SPD members was diminished by the last election. Numerically, you can speak of 30 or 40 members of the 200 members of the SPD caucus, but the hard core is small, probably not more than 10 or 15—not enough to prevent the government coalition from having a majority without them.

I personally am convinced that within the next one or two years, the notion that you can make an austerity policy without doubling the number of unemployed—which is the foundation of Schmidt's policy—will prove illusory. Which means that the number of German unemployed will increase very quickly within the next 12 months, with the consequence that the whole party must decide if it wants to correct the austerity policy or else see a very deep crisis between the trade union movement and the majority of the party.

ITT: So expecting this kind of crisis is where it becomes important to present an analysis and an alternative program.

Albers: I think so. For instance, the decision to back the labor movement's aim of achieving the 35-hour work week would be a strategic decision to have unity between the trade union and the party, and if Schmidt ignores that need and allows the number of unemployed German workers to reach one and a half million, even two million, as forecast by some official economic institutes, I expect a hard internal debate within our party. The pressure of the labor movement, which cannot accept an enormous increase in the mass of unemployed people, will force SPD moderates to pay some attention to a few alternative proposals.

Herbert SCHUI

Hamburg University economics professor Herbert Schui told *In These Times*:

"I think the German Social Democrats will only use their election results to get the trade unions to go along with a policy that very much resembles the one proposed by the Free Democrats and some Christian Democrats.

"In Austria, there is a very large governmental sector, the former German productive institutions, iron and steel and so on, founded in the '30s by the German Reich and which after World War II became the national property of Austria. Those state industries adopted a no layoff policy. They kept workers on even if they didn't have enough work for them, even if they didn't have enough demand for steel products. The fact is that all those industries are run on deficits. Those deficits were to a large extent financed by the government oil corporation. That's a corporation that buys and sells oil and makes a lot of profit because its pricing policy is just the same as pri-

vate business. Nonetheless, they took this profit to subsidize the public sector and keep unemployment down. That is an instance of distribution of national income from profits to wages or from profits to consumption. It had an impact on the Austrian economy, by preventing a downward swing such as we can see in England."

ITT: Do you see problems on the horizon for the Austrian economy?

"The first problem is that if the nationalized industries go on losing money, and if they don't get subsidies from the government, then technological development is impeded. Their long-range competitive prospects are not as good as they should be. That problem could be solved by allocating funds to develop technology. But it's not being done.

"The other problem is that a lot of forces even within the Austrian Social Democratic Party are more anxious to attract foreign capital than to develop the state sector. They attract, for instance, General Motors or Siemens or AEG, instead of establishing themselves in those productive sectors. They give land for installations, tax breaks, very advantageous depreciation rates."

Josef CAP

Josef Cap, chairman of Austrian Young Socialists, vice president of International Union of Socialist Youth:

"With its nationalized industries, Austria can guarantee its high standard of living and the high standard of social welfare. We couldn't achieve socialism by the nationalized industries, but we could guarantee a high living standard.

"What I criticize is that multinationalals are given billions of schillings in government subsidies to come to Austria.

And for General Motors, major decisions are made in Detroit, so there is virtually no chance of influencing decisions on production, investments and profits in accordance with national interest. This is supposed to provide jobs. But we think General Motors will leave Austria when it doesn't get the profit it wants.

"We have a lot of the same problems other countries have. There's corruption, with stories involving our finance minister. And the social partnership, the climate of compromise, depoliticizes the working class. But there is interest in the environment, in the anti-nuclear movement, demand for the 35-hour work week and disarmament, involving not just students. In our organization, 80 percent of the members are young workers. Socialist Youth played a key role in narrowly winning the anti-nuclear referendum.

"There was also a successful campaign to prevent the Austrian government from selling tanks to Chile.

"Austria imports more than it exports and has a huge trade deficit. Social security depends on deficit spending. The government is not going to socialism, but following a policy that stabilizes capitalism and gives it some beneficial social aspects. A classical Keynesian policy."

ITT: Is Austria then the last stronghold of Keynesian policy?

"Apparently it is. But Milton Friedman has also failed. When I look at the policy of Chile, the policy of Thatcher, I see total chaos.

"The Austrian government doesn't discuss economic theory very much, but makes practical policy. And so we have no unemployment, very low inflation rates of 5 or 6 percent, and economic growth between 3.5 and 4 percent. We like to travel a lot to other countries, but we are always happy to come back to Austria."

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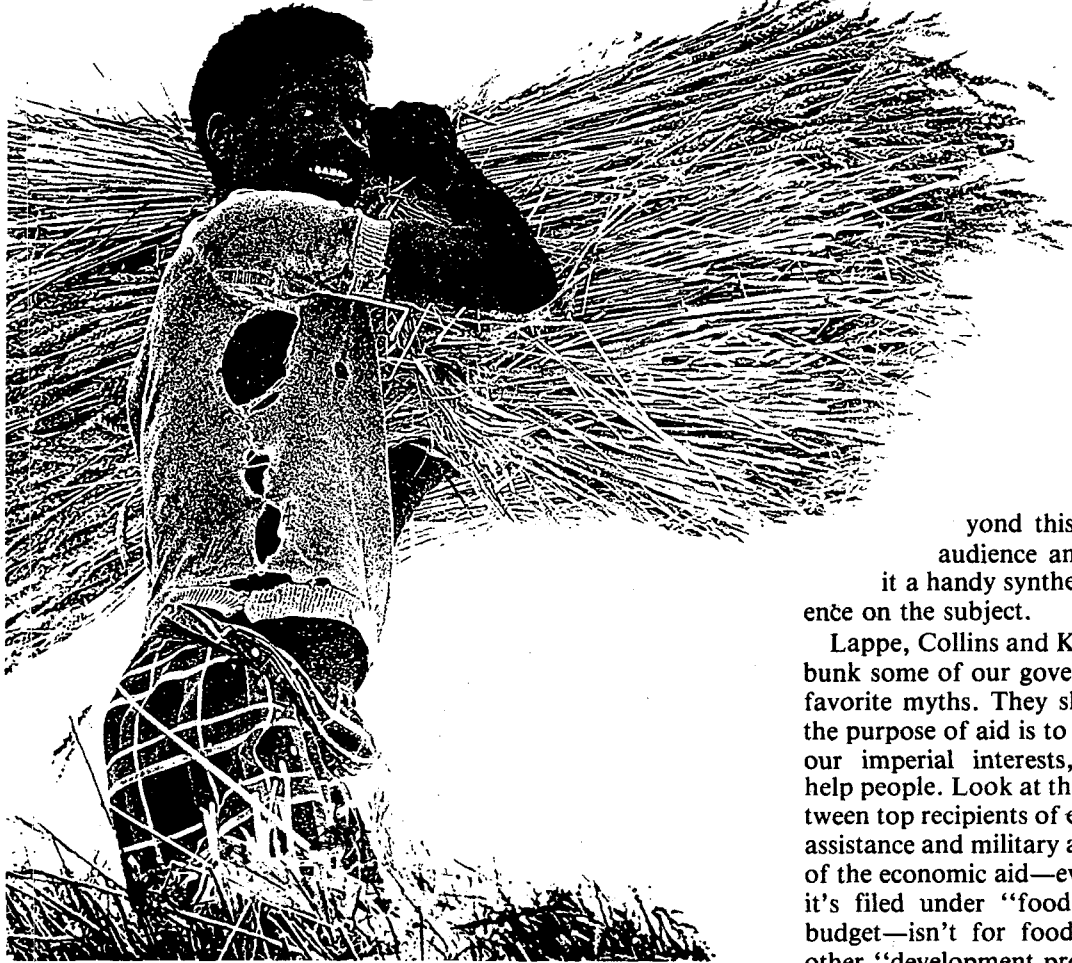
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INPRINT

HUNGER

The big lie about foreign aid



Aid as Obstacle: 20 questions about our foreign aid and the hungry

By Frances Moore Lappe, Joseph Collins & David Kinley
Institute for Food and Development Policy, 2588 Mission St., San Francisco, CA 94110, \$4.95 plus 50¢ postage

By Pat Aufderheide

The people at the Institute for Food and Development Policy (*Food First*) are playing 20 questions with our foreign aid policy—and it's worth it to play along.

They start from the perspective of every well-intentioned liberal who, urged on by visions of starving foreigners, cleaned his or her plate as a child. So many people elsewhere are hungry; what can we do to help? The Institute has a clear answer—cut off America aid.

Why? They explain it most fully in answer to question 18, their "most frequently asked" question. That question asks them how they can abandon the hungry now, even if programs are corrupt. "Aren't there some good aid projects?"

No, they say. No, not in the sense that a well-fed socially-concerned American means them. Our aid programs increase hunger by increasing the power of the rich and fostering international dependence. They increase hunger in the long run, of course. They also increase hunger in the very short run, because food doesn't get to the poor, who can't compete when prices for produce are deflated and because "aid" strengthens their landlords and bosses' position over them.

The Institute doesn't expect its audience, humanitarians who see problems as issues ("world hunger") rather than as social and political problems, to believe them. So they have structured the book carefully, complete with vivid examples and quot-

able statistics, to the kind of questions a thoughtful churchgoer is likely to ask. The authors invariably take the questioner seriously, as expressing real concern. The combination of their approach and the concise package of facts takes the book be-

yond this specific audience and makes it a handy synthetic reference on the subject. Lappe, Collins and Kinley debunk some of our government's favorite myths. They show that the purpose of aid is to shore up our imperial interests, not to help people. Look at the link between top recipients of economic assistance and military aid. Most of the economic aid—even when it's filed under "food" in the budget—isn't for food but for other "development projects."

Agricultural development is aimed at commercializing agriculture, fostering experts and turning peasants into consumers at the expense of their standard of living. Most of the hardware to make it happen must, under our terms, be bought from the

U.S. at noncompetitive prices.

But we do give food to poor countries, don't we? Well, no—or hardly. Mostly we sell it, without looking too closely at how it's distributed. The book recounts some effects of Public Law 480, which created a new market for burgeoning U.S. agricultural surpluses by allowing poor nations to buy our crops with their (weak) currency. This encourages dependence on our food and leaves them vulnerable. Look at what happened to Bolivia, where for years P.L. 480 food fed Bolivians until they stopped growing their local crops. Then the U.S. stopped letting Bolivians buy our food with their currency. Now they ante up hard-won foreign exchange to feed their people. If you do it right, P.L. 480 cookies don't even have to pass through many of the local elite's hands. Cargill, Inc., one of the handful of multinationals controlling the grain market, used P.L.480 currency to float a chicken-farming operation in Korea. Not only did the money subsidize Cargill's operation, but it increased Korea's dependence on imported grain.

But we do help out in emergencies, right? What about disasters and famines, when we donate food? The authors tell you about Bangladesh, where a hefty 80 percent of people who receive

ed grain sent to alleviate famine had the cash to buy it (that cuts out the ones who needed it). Or Ethiopia, where in the middle of a drought in the mid-'70s the corrupt government offered to sell the U.S. four thousand tons of grain so the U.S. could give it back. Or Guatemala after the earthquake, when farmers whose last hope was to sell their locally grown products at market were undercut by our flown-in food.

The stories roll out, not only about the manipulation of aid overseas but also about the agencies that make it happen. Both within the 20 questions format and in an appendicized primer on the "aid establishment," the institutions that organize this hustle are outlined. They are both national and international. One of the chilling implications of the Institute's information is the growing overt formality of the interlock between them, and between them and national and multinational corporations. Of particular interest is the scandalous behavior of the "World Bank Group," described here with terrifying proof as a "reckless lender."

Institute research found a small sprinkling of good news in all of this. They cite a consulting firm, the Economic Development Bureau, that takes local advice and uses appropriate technology. They also cite an Ox-fam-funded program of peasant education in Bangladesh.

By and large, though, their answer stands. Cut off foreign aid. They leave the "how" of it open, except to say that that is our problem within the wider problems of world hunger. The problems developing countries have will be solved by people there. Meanwhile, with Jesse Helms likely to be the head of the Senate Agriculture Committee, we have lots of work to do at home.

NOTEBOOK

Muslim National Communism in the Soviet Union:

A Revolutionary Strategy for the Colonial World

By Alexander A. Benningsen and S. Enders Wimbush
University of Chicago Press, 267 pp., \$7.95

A critical chapter in Soviet history, one fraught with vital contemporary implications, is treated in detail but not altogether satisfactorily. The best of the book consists of the assembling, both in the text and in appendices, of documents by and about Mir-Said

Sultan Galiev, the leader of the Muslim Communist movement during the Bolshevik Revolution. Also of value is the description of Galiev's contributions to the theories of nationality and of his fall from power and subsequent persecution during the Stalinist period. However, the authors seize too readily on the "paradox" of rural people trying to forge a revolutionary strategy out of an industrial theory like Marxism and fail to situate the Muslim Communist concept of "proletarian nations" within

Experimental photography (below) and film (right) became important in the German cultural scene.



an existing body of Marxist thought. Also missing is a sustained consideration of the mass appeal of Galiev's ideas. DRR

Art and Politics in the Weimar Period: The New Sobriety, 1917-1933

By John Willett
Pantheon, 272 pp., \$8.95

This comprehensive study of Weimar era culture is finally in paperback, and most welcome. It is essential reading for those interested in relations between art and a social and political context. The times were highly politicized, and so was art—plentiful illustrations, well-captioned, make a good case for the energy of the movement. Willett takes the study well past German boundaries, showing links between socially-committed German, central European and Russian artists, and the influence of American industrial and technological trends on them. Eventually Willett faces the hard question: "no Weimar culture," he asserts and then explains, "without Hitler's rise to power." A valuable chronology of political and artistic events is provided. PA

Al Qalam (The Pen)
No. 2, Oct. 1980

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Each issue of this new monthly is devoted to a single topic. This month is "Focus on Iran, demystifying the Islamic revolution." The lead article discusses the relationship of politics



and religion in Iran. Other articles discuss the hostage crisis (including Khomeini's comments to the Pope's special envoy concerning THE HOSTAGES). The text of "Bill Moyer's journal: Voices on Iran" is included. Eqbal Ahmad is among *Al Qalam's* contributing writers. JW

Contributors: Pat Aufderheide, David Roediger, Jim Weinstein

ART & ENTERTAINMENT

FOLK MUSIC

Been so long, been good to know you

By Ron Radosh

It was Christmas eve 1955, three years after America's foremost folk quartet, the Weavers, had been silenced by the McCarthy-era blacklist. The group—Pete Seeger, Lee Hays, Ronnie Gilbert and Fred Hellerman—decided to try and get together for one concert. They used to play the relatively small Town Hall, but the owners refused to rent it to the now controversial singers. So producer Harold Leventhal rented Carnegie Hall—"Harold was scared to death," Hellerman recalls.

His fears turned out to be groundless. The hall sold out and the concert album became the first big seller for the reunited group, which stayed together—with Erik Darling and later Frank Hamilton replacing Seeger—until 1963.

Now, 25 years later, the Weavers are singing once again—a reunion long awaited by folk aficionados—perhaps as much as children of the '60s hope for a reunion of the Beatles. The Weavers, after all, were the first group to popularize folk music, and as Joe Klein writes in his new biography of Woody Guthrie, "they were an interesting combination: Hellerman's baritone fit snugly between Hays' bass and Seeger's tenor, and Gilbert had an impressive voice that seemed capable of almost anything."

Record company executives and music publishers had been impressed when they heard the group back in 1949.

The quartet had sung at Max Gordon's club, the Village Vanguard, where they were heard by Decca records' orchestra leader and producer, Gordon Jenkins. Within six months—by mid-1950—the Weavers had a hit single, "Zena, Zena," soon followed by a string of others—"Kisses Sweeter Than Wine," "On Top of Old Smokey," Leadbelly's "Irene" and Woody Guthrie's "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You."

The quick success came to a crashing and sudden end. The Weavers' rise to fame coincided with the Korean war, the red-hunt at home and the deepening Cold War abroad. The time was not right for a group whose roots were in the democratic culture which had emerged from the era of the Popular Front. When *Red Channels* (the blacklist's basic compendium on who was not to be hired by the media) listed Pete Seeger's name, all air play for Weavers records ended and the group's appearances were cancelled. After informer Harvey Matusow named them before the House Un-American Activities Committee (HUAC) as Communists, they became total "untouchables," as David K. Dunaway wrote.

Their record sales totaled four million copies, yet Seeger marched in the 1952 May Day parade in New York wearing his World War II army uniform, carrying a sign that read "Censored." So it

was with great joy that the 1955 concert was greeted by the Weavers legion of loyal fans—who were testifying that the blacklists could not silence the music they had come to love.

But since their 1966 reunion concert, the Weavers' music has been but a memory, kept alive on the old Vanguard and Decca albums.

On the eve of their 25th Anniversary concert (31, if you count the year of formation) I spoke separately with three of the Weavers—Seeger, Hellerman and Gilbert—(Lee Hays was in

ers who made up the Weavers ready for the issues that position would raise.

Clearly, the Weavers had a big appeal. Hellerman remembers that the response they elicited was best described for him at a party by one of the Andrews sisters. A bit soused, she told him, "You know why you're great? Take a bunch of guys sitting at a bar. The juke box is playing the Weavers—or the Andrews Sisters—and they say, 'Hell, I can sing better than that.' We communicated that feeling. It wasn't really true, but

find slightly different opinions and attitudes. Ronnie Gilbert, the sole woman member, is now a feminist actress. She has lived the past few years in British Columbia and, until recently, has not paid much attention to music. It was not until she became acquainted with the songs of Holly Near, and after she listened to the work of Dory Previn, she tells me, that she again started concentrating on music. "I remembered I was a woman," she puts it, "and not just a part of the Weavers."

Ronnie Gilbert sees the Weavers' contribution as opening up folk music to the commercial arena. "We don't like to think of it this way," she says, "but the Weavers were part of the country world from the start." But their music retained an integrity. It was not tampered with, "not cutesy."

Unlike the other members, Gilbert liked the nightclub work—a change from the usual rallies, marches and meetings at which the other members had always sung. Audiences gravitated to them and the group soon had somewhat of a cult following. They would tell her that their singing made them feel wholesome. "We brought out the best in people," Gilbert says proudly. "When they heard us, they saw four different people

working together in a joyous way."

And she does not bemoan the commercial quality of the music. "We made the 'real thing' accessible. The next step was for people to want to hear Leadbelly, not just depend on our interpretation of his songs." Quoting Lee Hays, she agrees with him that the Weavers had a "gift" that they could use well. And she deprecates white singers who tried to imitate a black sound, rather than, as the Weavers did, seek to incorporate black music into their repertoire.

Two of the group—Hays and Seeger—had worked together for years as part of the legendary Almanac Singers, the group of folk musicians who toured the country in the '30s and '40s for the fledgling CIO unions, and before that, had sung for the American Youth Congress in the anti-war phase of the Communist movement. That association has led some commentators to see the Weavers as an attempt to reconstruct the Almanacs for a new era, or to recapture the experience of that past decade.

"I think we approached politics in an aesthetic way," Hellerman answered. "If art's going to be a weapon, it's still got to be art. So many of our songs might have had immediate merit, but

Continued on following page

The reunion of the Weavers at Carnegie Hall was as eagerly awaited by "folkies" as children of the '60s would a Beatles reunion.

poor health and saving his energy for the concert) about their reflections on their music and the times in which they have played such a vital part.

The Weavers are remembered for their commercial success as forerunners of groups that emerged in the early '60s—Peter, Paul and Mary, the Kingston Trio, the Limeliters and the Tarrriers. But when they began singing in 1949 their hopes were modest. "We certainly didn't say 'Let's get a group together and make a lot of money,'" Hellerman says. "The people we were singing for in those days couldn't support one person, not alone a few."

Indeed, Hellerman and the other Weavers were part of a group of friends who met on Wednesday afternoons in Pete Seeger's basement on MacDougal Street, where they sang harmony for fun. "It was a rough time for all of us," he says. Seeger had just come through a stint of campaigning across the country with Henry Wallace in 1948, and his overwhelming defeat dashed hopes for the Progressive Party. In addition its singing vehicle, People's Songs, also closed shop. They decided to take a job singing at the Village Vanguard, when owner/producer Max Gordon decided to give them a chance, "so we could still get together on Wednesday afternoons," Hellerman says. "But the thought of making a living from it was ludicrous—we got \$50 a week each, plus sandwiches."

But the group quickly became a commercial success, much to the Weavers' amazement. That success, however, produced tension and some conflict. The group had come out of a left cultural tradition, defined in 1947 by folklorist Alan Lomax as a "democratic art," in which the folksinger consciously spoke as "the advocate of the common man." Such a cultural context was never supposed to lead to major success in the capitalist marketplace, nor were the sing-

it was a sense that the person listening could do it on his own. People feel a kind of intimacy with us; our music becomes theirs."

Differences.

The Weavers, as Seeger says, are composed of four strong individuals. It is not surprising to



The Weavers then: left to right, Pete Seeger, Lee Hays, Ronnie Gilbert and Fred Hellerman.



Steve Kogan

Pete Seeger today; his only regret is not having reached a broader audience.

Continued from previous page
we tended to drop those once they didn't pertain. Our basic approach was not to apply political standards to the material. We just wanted good songs. There were times at our worst, really, when we tried things that ended up really pompous and didactic, that just weren't very good."

Hellerman denies that the Weavers sought to recapture the Almanac experience. Perhaps, he says, it was a combination of trying to sing for fun and to popularize folk music as well as to carry on a tradition. "We were aware that something marvelous had occurred with the Almanacs, but we knew that in the post-war period there was a need for something new, both musically and politically."

Pete Seeger has a slightly different emphasis. What he wanted, he recalls, was a better rehearsed group than the old Al-

manacs, one that consciously used and depended on musical arrangements; that went beyond mere ad-libbing with a bunch of singers. "There are some songs that one person just can't do well alone," he puts it.

What the Weavers accomplished, he thinks, was to "change country music to be listened to by city people," and he notes that this is a process in which he and Lee Hays have been struggling for over 40 years.

Purists on the left, then and now, could not refrain from attacking the Weavers precisely because folk music began to reach the folk. Morris Dickstein writes in the Nov. 8 *Nation*, for example, that the Weavers were the first group "to put folk music on the national charts and make it pay," and he argues that their songs were changed into "smooth popular hits, with most of the grit and dust remov-

ed." And Joe Klein claims that the Weavers "bowdlerized" Leadbelly's "Irene" in order "to fit the public taste." The Weavers, Klein writes, "were presenting only a pale copy of what the music could be."

The group's members are all adamant that such criticism is not fair. Seeger says it is a mistake often made to claim that they were the first to make folk music into a hit. "Die Mier Best du Schein," an old Yiddish tune, was an Andrews Sisters hit in the '40s. In the '20s, an old slave song was changed into "It Ain't Gonna Rain No More." And while he agrees that some of their songs were bowdlerized, he is firm that "Irene" wasn't one of them, "unless," he chuckles,

But Seeger emphasizes that blues and rock are the urban folk music of our era. "There is more honest folk tradition in a good pop rock song than in the whole of 1964," he argues, and he stresses that a direct line exists from early blues through '40s and '50s electric blues, and that of the heavily amplified rock music of today. This music, he says, "is not self-conscious in any way, like the music of the so-called folk boom was."

He is bothered by people who tell him they haven't heard folk since 1964, and he tells them that they are hearing more of it when "they turn on a good solid rock song based on the old 12 bar blues." Seeger has only pleasure

"The 'folk boom,'" Seeger says, "gave people a bum steer. There's honest folk tradition in a good pop rock song."

"you don't like violins," referring to the track added by Gordon Jenkins—which he notes "was a surprise to all of us."

When critics argue that the bite was removed, they often cite the Weaver's first version of Woody Guthrie's "So Long, It's Been Good to Know You," his great dust bowl classic, which was changed to refer to a lover's leaving a mate. "It was Woody himself who made those changes," stresses Hellerman. "I remember him sitting in Gordon Jenkins' suite at the Hotel Carlyle, coming up to the room with an enormous roll of brown wrapping paper, which he spread out on the floor and set out to change all the verses."

The real problem was of another sort—being subjected to the tyranny of the three-minute single record. That criterion forced them to delete some of Leadbelly's verses of "Irene." "I just don't think the critics have a valid point here."

Ronnie Gilbert points to the ambiguity of the group's title—which was taken from a play title by Gerhart Hauptmann, a German leftist. It might just have been taken from Burns' "The Work of the Weavers," or be referring to the work of industrial labor, she notes. She recalls that she and the others had an ongoing interest in continuing to sing for the labor movement or wherever they could be useful—they were to have been featured at the famous Peekskill concert that starred Paul Robeson and was attacked by a mob—but she stresses that unlike the Almanac Singers, they made no attempt to duplicate the communal lifestyle of their predecessors.

Ironically, the resurrected Weavers disbanded right before the '64-65 folk boom, and the success of groups like Peter, Paul and Mary, that even made a hit song of the Weavers' own "Hammer Song." "In the '60s," Gilbert says, "a lot of political stuff lost its punch, in the way everything become co-opted, swallowed up and easily digested."

Seeger has another response. "The so-called folk boom," he says, "gave Americans a bum steer—the idea that folk music only came from the Kentucky mountains." Seeger's emphasis comes as a surprise, since he has a reputation as somewhat of a purist, as the man who attempted to prevent Bob Dylan from playing electric guitar at Newport in 1963.

at the Byrds' rendition of his own "Turn, Turn, Turn," a major hit in the early '60s.

Do the Weavers have any bitter feelings about the blacklist, and the fact that it cut them off from the type of fame and fortune met by groups like PP&M in a future period? "The country as a whole," emphasizes Hellerman, "did a lot worse than we did.... I wouldn't want to send the inquisitors a note of thanks," he says, but the forced lapse in their careers led him to sit down and learn music seriously. "Whatever subsequent skills I developed, I did during those three lean years." Seeger regrets most not being able to "get our music before a broader audience," although, he acknowledges, that would have made for more complications. He adds that "the experience of the Weavers can be used to point out that the people who run the mass media know where their bread is buttered." When songs like Bob Dylan's "Times They Are A-Changin'" got to the top of the charts, he believes, "they throw a scare into the powers that be."

Left attacks.

Just as the Weavers were attacked by the right-wing in the early '50s and blacklisted, they were condemned from some quarters on the left. As the Communist party became a major victim of Cold War repression, its own leaders responded by waging their own hunt for heretics—conducted under the guise of a massive internal campaign to root out "white chauvinism." The Weavers were a clear target—they were an all-white group, and they were singing black music. In an article appearing in *Sing Out!*, editor Irwin Silber asked, "Can an all-white group sing songs from Negro culture?" His answer was no.

Ronnie Gilbert recalls the period with bitterness and anger. She points to the stress created by attacks from their would-be supporters precisely when they were under fierce attack from the right wing. "It took all kinds of energy," she notes, "to remain sympathetic to a movement and to people in that movement when they launched such an attack."

To this date, she says, she has never received an apology—save from the late Betty Sanders, who had been involved closely with People's Artists in those years. The attacks produced "terrific

barriers" and soul-searching within the group. Most important, she presents the left attack because she believes the left should have been concentrating on uniting people, "and see what they have in common, not emphasize what separates them." Yet she feels the Weavers "survived and transcended" the attack, having rejected an approach that would have separated people.

Pete Seeger prefers to look at the issue of racism itself. "Like most people," he says, "white singers make an attempt to come to terms with racism, but we rarely succeed. It may be that the criticisms the Weavers got were misphrased, it may be that they were right." The problem, as he sees it, is that black music had traditionally been sung and popularized by whites—from Scott Joplin through spirituals and gospel to jazz.

So the Weavers flourished. Some of their tastes have changed. Seeger talks of rock as the new urban folk music—but this doesn't mean, Hellerman says, that they will attempt to do songs from this genre in their reunion concert. "It's like Jimmy Carter acting like a Republican," he says. "The Republicans do it better than he does."

Pete Seeger sums up the Weavers' impact: "I think the Weavers did an important job at a particular time." He says that, as in life, both private and political, people are forced to decide whether to move exactly in the direction desired or move in a slightly different direction along with other people. The Weavers took the latter course, he feels, but "went in the right direction."

The Weavers' music once again comes to us as a refreshing and honest refrain from the spoon-fed pap blaring at us on AM and FM playlists—reminding us of where we once were, and where we can move culturally once again.

Ron Radosh, who plays banjo and guitar, has long had an interest in folk music.

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LOS ANGELES, CA

December 6

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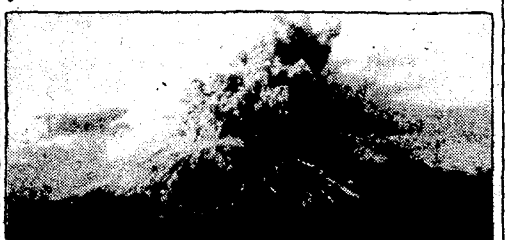
ABC is producing a TV movie, *Rescue!*,

based on the true story of a 1979 American civilian commando team that rescued two hostage businessmen in Tehran. "We feel the movie-going public hungers for the kind of heroism and courage Simons and his team demonstrated amid the chaos and danger that was, and still is, Iran," said ABC's president Brandon

Stoddard.

IF ONLY THEY'D HAD CAMERAS AT POMPEII

Two TV stations have put together a videotape of "The Best of St. Helens," which is selling well. One of the producers says "every time the mountain burps it stimulates new interest."



THEATER

Lesbian love story is well received

By Mary Panzer

Last Summer at Bluefish Cove, with its frank subtitle, "A Lesbian Love Story," received praise for author (Jane Chambers), production (The Glines) and cast (starring Jean Smart) from its inception at the First Gay Arts Festival in New York through its summer run Off-Off-Broadway. "A fine play...filled with humor even as some very real and difficult times emerge" (WBAI); "One of the finest scripts present in reason season" (the Blade); "A dazzling blend of joy and sorrow" (Other Stages); "A rewarding experience...don't miss it" (WOR-TV).

The play presents a simple situation. Eva, a straight woman who has just left her husband, rents a house on Bluefish Cove and unknowingly joins a colony of lesbians—old friends from long summers and twined partnerships. Eva meets Lil (a self-defined "alley cat") and they fall in love, much to the chagrin of the group. But Lil is dying of cancer, which everyone but Eva knows. In the last half of the play Eva discovers Lil's secret and Lil, painfully, lets her go.

The play, in *Village Voice* critic Michael Feingold's words, is "a dramatic bombshell of the good old-fashioned kind." Emotions run high. In response to her approaching death, Lil makes

difficult decisions. She's gallant, clear-eyed and achingly erring while our eyes cloud with tears. But it all works because Lil's importance to her friends presents each one to dramatic advantage.

Middle-aged Kitty Cochrane is famous for her feminist books on sexuality. She lived with Lil for several years but a couple of summers ago they broke up over sexy Donna (still in her 20s). Donna eventually stayed with Sue because of Sue's money—and in spite of Sue's advancing age. Donna still pines for Lil. Rita (close to 40) now is Kitty's loyal secretary and companion. She's worried about the effect Eva could have on Kitty's still closeted reputation. Annie, Lil's friend from college, has kept to their vow: "Never lovers, always friends." She is a successful sculptor and lives with Rae and Rae's two kids in a traditional family set-up that is already nine years old. Annie, Lil and Rae, like Eva, are in their 30s. Within this mesh of sexual and platonic friendship, Eva is our surrogate. We're deeply involved from the

moment she meets Lil until the group embraces her at last.

The play doesn't dwell on sexuality or sexual preference. Eva's attraction to Lil is simply believable and strong. In this lesbian community, a varied group of adult women explore something other than sexuality—the problem of deep and lasting friendship. Romance can't isolate the lovers from other sources of emotional sustenance; all ties are equally strong.

The reviews that do not celebrate the subtitle of *Last Summer at Bluefish Cove* miss an opportunity to welcome new subjects, new conflicts and refreshingly new material to the American stage. Deep friendship among women has no stronger dramatic advocate than Jane Chambers. Her play, *A Late Snow*, appears in *Gay Plays, the First Anthology* (Avon, 1979). The Glines, a non-profit production company, will re-open *Bluefish Cove* Off-Broadway at the Actors Playhouse on Dec. 25. ■



Jane Chambers, author of *LAST SUMMER AT BLUEFISH COVE*

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minimum wage ROCK & ROLL

by Bruce Dancis

Stereotypes have taken a pounding after being exposed to *Minimum Wage Rock & Roll* (Arista), the debut album by a Los Angeles-based band called the Bus Boys. With an abundance of satire, a keen-eyed critical perspective on such matters as the KKK, neighborhood segregation, abysmal wages and nuclear weapons, and some strong instrumental and vocal performances, this black rock and roll band (except for a Chicano drummer) makes good on their claim: "I bet you never heard music like this by spades."



In fact, we haven't—at least not for a long time. Considering rock's rhythm and blues roots and the centrality of figures like Chuck Berry, Little Richard, Jimi Hendrix and Sly Stone in shaping the sound of rock for over 25 years, there are few black rockers today. Racially segregated programming practices on the part of most FM rock stations have contributed greatly to the distance between black and white audiences. Where it was once common for a fan of the Beatles or the Stones to also enjoy the Four Tops or Otis Redding or Aretha Franklin, it is now rare for either whites or blacks to pay attention to what is increasingly seen as someone else's music.

The Bus Boys openly address and have fun with this state of affairs. One of their best songs is a Berry-style rocker entitled "Johnny Soul'd Out" (with "ooohs" via John, Paul, George and Ringo), whose key line is "He's into rock and roll and he's given up the rhythm and blues."

Brian O'Neal, the 24-year-old founder and one of the main songwriters (along with his younger brother Kevin) in the Bus Boys, discussed the group's origins and outlook with *In These Times* recently in San Francisco. "I wanted to pick a name and a concept that doesn't hide the issue [of being a black rock band], but addresses it. That also was representative of our knowing that we were gonna be underdogs," he said. Many record companies "told us that a black rock and roll band wouldn't work commercially."

The way the Bus Boys address the issue is by wearing bus boy outfits, breaking into outrageous Steppin' Fetchit shuffles, and generally vamping on usual black musical patterns by playing hard-edged, often New Wavy music. O'Neal believes that their audiences understand the parody. "It can grab you on several levels—it's entertaining and the satire and



sociological comments are there for those who can comprehend."

Their songs seem to hit responsive chords among Bus Boy listeners. "Minimum Wage" ("I wash the dishes, I mop the floor/I'm glad I'm alive, who could ask for more") is one of their crowd pleasers. O'Neal explains, "Everybody can relate to it. Everybody's worked for less than they should get paid." Another song, the loose and funky "There Goes the Neighborhood," works particularly well with blacks and Chicanos in the audience.

At first the band played before virtually all-white crowds in the rock clubs around Los Angeles. But that is changing. Now, according to O'Neal, "the crowd is almost split—about 65

percent white, the rest others."

Appealing to such a multi-racial following seems both desirable and natural to O'Neal, who grew up in a Gardena, Calif., community "where there were a lot of different kinds of people—Samoans, Orientals, blacks, whites, Chicanos." He credits his political awareness to this diversity, as well as having "the opportunity to be around an educated environment." O'Neal's parents came from poor families, but now both his mother and father have master's degrees and have been long-time employees of the Los Angeles Board of Education.

O'Neal is well aware of what has happened to the popular music audience. "Over the years, it seems that blacks and whites, especially on a youthful level, separated, and withdrew from one another and made their cultural artifacts—their music and stuff like that—the personal property of each. Until the Bus Boys, only a few artists like Earth, Wind & Fire and Sly and the Family Stone had a point of identification for both blacks and whites."

But he is optimistic, not least because of the musical cross-pollination currently being led by groups such as Talking Heads. One of the most artistically challenging New Wave bands (*In These Times*, Oct. 31, 1979), the Talking Heads have recently moved into funk and African rhythms on their new *Remain in Light* album and added a number of black musicians to their lineup, while at the same time retaining their avant-garde tendencies.

O'Neal feels that the Heads, one of his favorite bands even before their recent changes, will reach the black community. "The music is so strong, it'll force [black radio stations] to play it. You can take that album to any party, any disco, anywhere black people are dancing, and they'll love it."

The Bus Boys have encountered some hostility among white rock fans—usually from people who came to hear another band on the bill and don't know quite what to make out of the outrageous black assemblage they're seeing and hearing for the first time. But for the most part, audiences and the press have been extremely enthusiastic.

The band signed a lucrative, multi-album deal with Arista and seems to receive extensive support from the record company. In the meantime, O'Neal is producing a new band called Roach and the White Boys, featuring a young black woman and an all-white backup band. More minimum wage rock and roll would seem to be on the way.

The fact that the Bus Boys are a black rock and roll band will initially cause people to pay attention. The fact that they are witty and engaging should make their attractiveness more than skin deep.

Bruce Dancis is a rock journalist in San Francisco.

